This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

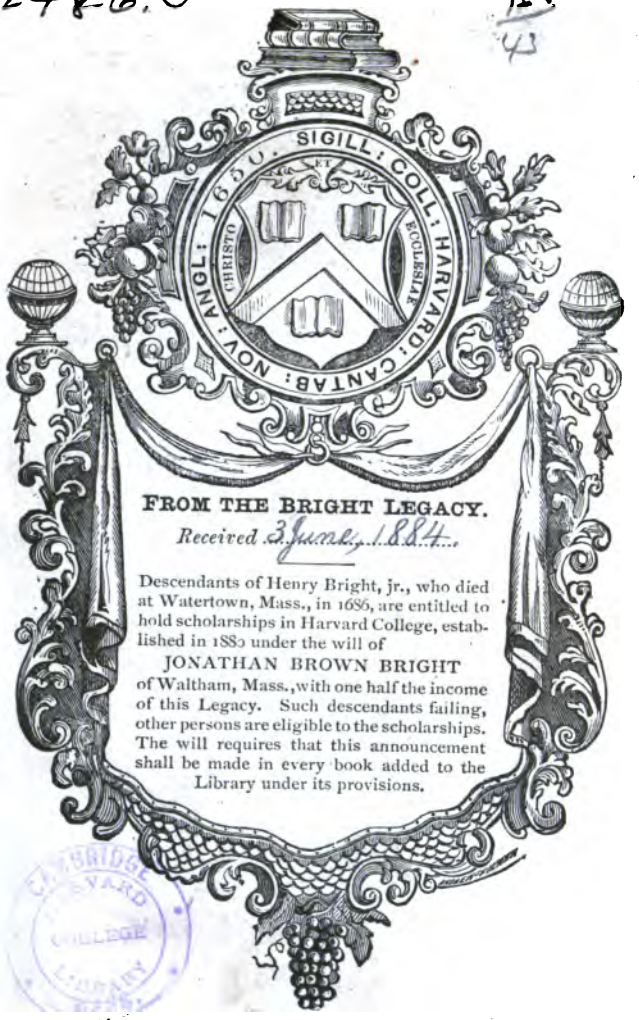
About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

WIDENER
HN N8BX T

22486.3

14K
43



FROM THE BRIGHT LEGACY.

Received 3 June, 1884.

Descendants of Henry Bright, jr., who died at Watertown, Mass., in 1686, are entitled to hold scholarships in Harvard College, established in 1883 under the will of

JONATHAN BROWN BRIGHT

of Waltham, Mass., with one half the income of this Legacy. Such descendants failing, other persons are eligible to the scholarships. The will requires that this announcement shall be made in every book added to the Library under its provisions.

CAMBRIDGE HARVARD COLLEGE LIBRARY

TALES AND TRADITIONS
OF
SWITZERLAND.

TALES AND TRADITIONS

OF

SWITZERLAND.

BY

WILLIAM WESTALL,

AUTHOR OF "TALES AND TRADITIONS OF SAXONY," "THE OLD FACTORY," "LARRY LOHENGRIN," ETC.

London:

TINSLEY BROTHERS, 8, CATHERINE ST., STRAND.

1882.

[*All rights reserved.*]

22476.3

JUN 3 1884
Bright fund.

BOUND 16 APR 1912

CHARLES DICKENS AND EVANS,
CRYSTAL PALACE PRESS.

CONTENTS.

THE BUILDER OF BERNE.

PAGE

CHAP. I. 3

„ II. 14

THE SILVER CHAIN.

CHAP. I. 27

„ II. 38

„ III. 45

„ IV. 54

THE BATTLE OF THE WINDS.

PAGE

CHAP. I.—SUNNY MEMORIES 73

„ II.—DIVIDED LIVES 87

„ III.—THE RISING STORM 101

„ IV.—THE BATTLE AND THE VICTIMS . 112

„ V.—AT THE FOOT OF THE CROSS . . 122

„ VI.—RECONCILIATION 130

THE CHÂTELAIN'S DAUGHTER . . . 137

THE SPITTLER OF THE GRIMSEL . . 163

THE DRUID STONE OF VERSONNEX . . 187

POTENTATE AND PARSON.

CHAP. I.—THE LENKERHORN DYNASTY . . 215

„ II.—THE NEW PASTOR 225

„ III.—THE AMMAN AND HIS COUNCILLORS 232

„ IV.—A RARE FLOWER 239

„ V.—VICTORY AND DEFEAT 262

LUCKY SAM BRIGGS.

PAGE

CHAP. I. 275

„ II. 285

„ III. 301

„ IV. 312

„ V. 324

THE BUILDER OF BERNE.

THE BUILDER OF BERNE.

CHAPTER I.

A THOUSAND years ago (more or less) there lived in the hill country, not far from the town now known as Freiburg in the Breisgau, a poor charcoal-burner. Though he toiled hard from early morn to dewy eve, it was all he could do to keep body and soul together. Being of an aspiring turn of mind, this charcoal-burner was bitterly discontented with his lot; and when he looked down into the valley and saw the lordly castles that crowned every eminence, and the turrets of more than one palatial religious house, he cursed the cruel fate that had made him a hewer of wood, instead of a powerful baron or a wealthy abbot. Often, after his day's work was done, would he throw himself, half-tired to death,

on his rude bed of leaves, and ponder deeply on the mysterious dispensation which makes of one man a pauper and another a prince.

"Do we not all come into the world naked?" he thought. "Are we not born equal? Is not one man as good as another? What have those fellows down there done that they should be clothed in purple and fine linen, and fare sumptuously every day, while I am forced to live up here all alone like a mountain cat, feed on bacon and black bread, and sleep on a bed of leaves in a leaky old hut? I am as good as any of them—ay, better; for my body is stouter, my limbs are bigger and stronger than theirs. Not one of them that I have seen yet—even the burly Otto von Riesenberg—that I could not brain with my staff—in spite of their long swords and those iron pots they put on their stupid heads."

As the poor charcoal-burner's reflections always terminated in sleep, the solution of the problem was indefinitely deferred.

At length an event occurred which gave an entirely new turn to his thoughts, and altered the whole course of his life. In order to convert the wood he cut, during the day, into charcoal, he

covered it over with clay, set it on fire, and left the heap to smoulder all night. One morning, the most memorable of his life, when he went to his furnace, as usual, and removed the charcoal, he saw, lying on the floor, a great bar of pure silver, still hot as if it had just been smelted. He uttered a shout of joy, and after further testifying his pleasure by a vigorous dance round his furnace, he picked up the precious find, tied it up in an old clout, and hid it carefully away in a corner of his hut. The next morning he found that his furnace had produced another ingot, and as the supply went on without intermission, he had soon a very respectable pile, which, in the absence of a lock-up cupboard or a strong room, he concealed under a heap of leaves and branches.

About this time the charcoal-burner, no longer poor, chanced to make a journey to the plain, where he heard that the once-powerful king of a neighbouring country, driven from his throne by a revolution, and now dwelling in a humble cottage hard by, had issued a proclamation offering the hand of his daughter and a principality to whomsoever should advance him enough money to equip an army and recover his throne.

"A princess and a principality!" said the charcoal-burner to himself. "Exactly what I want. The arrangement will suit me to a T. To-morrow I will wait on his ex-majesty and make him a tender of my assistance."

So next morning the charcoal-burner, after donning his Sunday best (which was not, however, much better than his week-day worst), and washing his face (a thing that, as a rule, he did only on Sundays, but this was a special occasion), he shouldered his sack of silver, and set out for the plain. The sack having been used for carrying charcoal, was necessarily very dirty, and the day being warm, and the charcoal-burner not possessing a pocket-handkerchief, he was forced to use his hands, blackened by contact with the sack, to stroke the perspiration from his brow (varied by an occasional application of his coat-sleeve), so that when he arrived at the royal abode his appearance was, perhaps, not quite as courtly as he supposed.

The door was opened by a stout old gentleman, who had formerly been the monarch's prime minister.

"What do you want?" he asked, rudely and suspiciously.

"I want to see the king."

"What is your business?"

"That is my business."

And without further parley the charcoal-burner pushed the old gentleman on one side and stalked into the house.

He found the king sitting on a three-legged stool.

"What do you want?" asked his majesty, using just the same words as his prime minister had done.

"I want to help you to win back your kingdom, on the conditions set forth in your proclamation."

"*You!*" exclaimed the astonished monarch. "*You!* Why, you are only a common man. *You* cannot help me to my kingdom."

"Wait till you have seen my credentials," said the charcoal-burner, at the same time pouring the glittering contents of his sack at the king's feet. "What do you think of that now? And there's more where that comes from."

"God bless me! You must be Crœsus come to life again. Where have you got all this money? Who are you?"

"A king's son-in-law and a duke, if your majesty is a true man."

"I am a true man, my lord duke; and, as you will find, as good as my word. Come hither, Iona, my dear."

Whereupon a beautiful girl of seventeen entered the room; and she was so graceful, and so splendidly dressed withal, that the poor charcoal burner felt quite ashamed of his rough garb and dirty face.

"Behold in this gentleman your future husband, Iona," said the king.

The princess bowed, and put her lily-white hand into the charcoal-burner's horny fist.

"Circumstances, over which he has no control," continued the monarch, "have prevented him from appearing in apparel more befitting the occasion; but, as this pile of silver which he has just poured at my feet testifies, he is rich, and when we have recovered our rights, as, thanks to his help, we speedily shall, your husband, my child, will be one of the greatest men in the land."

His majesty proved a true prophet. He succeeded in his enterprise, and the charcoal-burner

was created Duke of Zaehringen and Carinthia, and made ruler over all the region round about. He developed high qualities as an administrator, and showed himself fully worthy of the king's confidence and kindness. He built himself a magnificent castle at Zaehringen, a place from which he derived his principal title, and became celebrated, far and wide, as Berthold the Bearded. But, strangely enough, all this property did not bring him content; and there were times when he wished that he had remained a simple charcoal-burner in the same forests of the Breisgau, where he now hunted the wild-boar and the red-deer, with a lordly following of knights and retainers. The Princess Iona died a few years after their marriage, and for his second wife Berthold took a noble lady, with an immense fortune and a bad temper. He had a large family, and his sons were not always obedient, nor his daughters always loving. His feudatories were rebellious, his thralls discontented, and he had frequent disputes with his suzerain—the king who succeeded the monarch whom he had helped to win back his kingdom. Berthold's troubles preyed on his mind, He grew gloomy and morose, gave way to ungovernable

fits of rage, and led his servitors such a terrible life, that, had he not paid them extraordinary wages, they would have struck work in a body and left him to serve himself.

One day, when the duke happened to be in a particularly bad humour, his major-domo waited upon him, as was his custom, to inquire what it would please his serene highness to have for dinner.

"Dinner, dinner," exclaimed the duke savagely, "the devil take the dinner!"

"Yes, your highness," answered the major-domo gravely; "but it must first be made. What would it please your highness to order?"

"Bring me," said Berthold, with a snarl—"bring me a roast baby."

"Yes, your highness," replied the servant; and as he silently withdrew, the lord of Zaehringen breathed a sigh and sank into deep thought.

Two hours later he was roused from his reverie by the entrance of the major-domo, who ushered in two waiters carrying between them an enormous dish.

Horror of horrors! On the dish lay, done to a

turn and beautifully browned, the trussed-up body of a six-months-old baby.

"What is that?" roared Berthold the Bearded, rising from his chair, his eyes aflame, and his red beard bristling with rage. "What, in the name of all the fiends, have you got there?"

"The roast baby you ordered for dinner, my lord duke."

"You have never dared—you don't mean to tell me, varlets, that you have killed and cooked a poor little baby; that you took my random words seriously? By the piper that played before Moses, by the grave of my mother and the bones of my father, I'll gibbet every man jack of you as high as Haman!"

"You surely would not be so unjust, my lord duke," answered the major-domo, without the slightest sign of discomposure. "We have only obeyed your orders, and you always visit disobedience with your severest displeasure. We dared not do otherwise."

"It is true, it is true," exclaimed Berthold, sinking back into his chair; "wretched man that I am! You have only done your duty. I am rightly served. Take the unlucky little wretch

away, and see that it has christian burial. I must try to make what poor amends to the parents I can."

"They want no amends, my lord duke."

"How?"

"Cook bought it from the mother—one of the thralls. She seemed glad to get rid of it, your serene highness."

"Did she know for what purpose it was intended?"

"She did, my lord duke."

"Good heavens!" gasped the duke, "what *is* the world coming to?"

From that moment Berthold knew not a moment's peace. If he had eaten it, the baby could not have lain heavier on his soul. He made pilgrimages, performed penances, and, in hope of purging his soul and appeasing the wrath of Heaven, he built the famous town of Freiburg in the Breisgau, and set in the midst of it a fine church. He also built and endowed two convents in the Black Forest, said many prayers, received frequent absolutions, and burnt thousands of candles at the shrines of hundreds of saints. But all was in vain: he failed to regain his peace

of conscience; and Berthold the Bearded, Lord of Zaehringen and Carinthia, died, bitterly regretting that he had been tempted to exchange his charcoal-burning and his quiet life in the woods for the coronet of a duke and the hand of a princess.

CHAPTER II.

SHADOWY though the story of Berthold the Bearded undoubtedly is, there are acute critics who see in it a fable based upon truth. They think that the great house which he, or somebody else, founded owed its rise to successful mining operations, of which fact the legend of the silver ingot is no more than the poetic and slightly exaggerated expression. Be that as it may, Berthold's successors were historic and sufficiently tangible personages. Their sway extended over the region of the Black Forest, and much of the country now known as Switzerland owned their rule.

Berthold II. married Agnes of Rheinfelden, and died in 1111; Berthold III. married Sophia of Bavaria, and died in 1123; Berthold V. sur-

named the "Rich," last and greatest of the Dukes of Zaehringen, inherited from his father, Berthold IV., the regency of Burgundy east of the Jura. This heritage was a troublesome one; it embittered his life and hastened his death. The Burgundian nobles, always turbulent and rebellious, resisted the reforms by which he sought to ameliorate the lot of his lowlier subjects, and fiercely resented the favour which he showed to the towns and traders, who greatly aided him in his efforts to check the overweening arrogance of his feudatories. When they openly rebelled he met them in the field, and, after several encounters, defeated them in a pitched battle. To consolidate his victory, and the better to hold his own in any future contests that might arise, he fortified Moudon and Yverdon (canton Vaud), and the castle of Burgdorf (canton Berne), which last he chose for a residence. But his greatest exploit in building was the building of the city of Berne.

The first scene in a famous comedy, in twenty acts, written in 1609, by Michael Stetter, a senator of Berne, represents the duke as calling together his council in Burgdorf Castle, and making a

speech to this effect: "An old proverb, handed down to us by our ancestors, has it that when riches and honours come in by one door, hatred and envy enter by another. My father, who ranked high among the European potentates, knew well the truth of this adage; and I, who inherit from him the fine duchy of Burgundy and the beautiful lordship of Nydeck, I also, who wish no man ill, have incurred the hatred of my nobles. But God, in his goodness, has bestowed upon me great blessings. I have many faithful servants. I have never oppressed the poor. I detest tyranny and pride; therefore, my friends, do these haughty nobles hate me. But I have the love of my people—have I not, Baron of Bubenberg?"

"The people look up to you as their protector and friend," answered the baron, who was one of the duke's most faithful ministers.

After a long deliberation with his council, Berthold decides that the best means of keeping the nobles in order and protecting the people from their exactions, is to build a walled city in a central position, into which they may gather and live in peace.

Then the first huntsman is sent for, a man of years and wisdom, who knows every stream, and hill, and forest in the country, and asked for his advice touching the site of the proposed city. In reply he makes a long speech, wherein, after protesting his devotion to the duke and his dynasty, and his sense of the honour conferred upon him in demanding his counsel, he argues that the most advantageous position for a great town is in the neighbourhood of his highness's hunting-tower of Nydeck, on the left bank of the Aar.

The suggestion finding favour with the duke, he announces, amid the plaudits of his councillors, that on the following day there will be a grand hunt in the forest of Nydeck, and that the first beast killed shall give his name to the new city.

Whereupon the Baron of Bubenberg opines that the name of a city being a matter of high moment, it is greatly to be desired that the first spoil of the chase may be some fine and noble animal.

The first hunter answers that the forest abounds with all sorts of large game, particularly with red and fallow deer; but that he and his

faithful *piqueurs* will use their utmost efforts to lay at the feet of his highness a lordly bear.

In the olden times the river Aar, after leaving the lake of Thun and bathing the walls of the ancient church of Schertzlingen, flowed through the town of Thun, which, with its fortifications, defended the territories of Zaehringen from the seigneurs of the Oberland. With many bends the stream then traversed thick and sombre pine woods, in the midst whereof stood the great castle of Bubenberg. Next, as if flying affrighted from those wilds, it threw itself, spinning and swirling, into the valley of Matte, where there were several corn-mills belonging to the lord of Bubenberg. Farther on, the Aar forced its way through a narrow gorge, formed by oak-crowned hills, on one of which stood the duke's hunting-tower of Nydeck. A wooden bridge, defended by a bastion, crossed the Aar—hereabouts white with foam, and tossing tempestuously in its rock-strewn bed.

This was the scene of the chase which should decide the name of the new city.

Early in the morning the Duke of Zaehringen, attended by a train of gallant knights and a bevy

of fair ladies, crossed the wooden bridge and took his stand on a jutting rock, whence could be seen all the preliminary incidents of the hunt; for it was intended to drive the quarry to near where Berthold stood, and kill him at the ducal feet.

The duke had not long to wait. In less than an hour the notes of the huntsman's horn, the shouts of the *piqueurs*, and the baying of the hounds, proclaimed that one of the wild animals of the forest had been tracked to his lair. Then came a crackling of branches, a trampling of hoofs, a ringing cheer, and a mighty he-bear, with great gleaming teeth and lolling tongue, rushed out of the wood and ran at full speed towards the river. For a moment he hesitated, but hearing the cries behind him, he plunged into the seething water and struck out boldly for the other side. The duke and his companions, seeing this, gave their horses the rein and were just in time to turn the bear back as he rose from the river. The *piqueurs* and the hounds came up at the same time. All rushed pell-mell into the water. A terrible fight followed, and the Aar was dyed deep with bruin's blood, mingled with that of

more than one of his foes, whom his terrible paws had laid low. But numbers were against him, and in a few minutes the carcase was dragged from the water and laid at the duke's feet.

"It is a fine and powerful animal, gentlemen," said Berthold. "BAER" (bear, hence Berne) "shall be the name of our new city; and it will one day be as powerful, and as much feared by its enemies, as that bear was feared by the other denizens of the forest."

On his return to the tower Berthold conferred with his councillors as to whom he should confide the execution of the great scheme on which they had unanimously resolved. Nobody was considered so suitable as the Baron of Bubenberg, who had travelled in many lands and had great experience; and to him accordingly was the task intrusted.

Not long after this event a terrible misfortune befell the house of Zaehringen. The two sons of the duke died suddenly at Burgdorf of a mysterious malady which the leeches who were called in declared to be due to a subtle poison. According to tradition, the poisoning

was contrived by some of Berthold's discontented nobles, in revenge for the severe measures he had taken against them. They were said to have effected their object through the instrumentality of his second wife, the Countess of Freiburg, whom one of the conspirators had persuaded to give the children poison, under the pretext that it was a harmless potion, and good for their health. The duke, in full belief that his wife was privy to the foul deed, had her put to death. He afterwards discovered how she had been deceived by the conspirators, and that she was no more guilty of the crime for which she had suffered than himself. The duke's life was thenceforth overshadowed by two great sorrows. He grieved for his sons and he grieved for his wife, and his grief was sharpened by the bitter consciousness, ever present in his soul, that he had imbrued his hands in innocent blood. Switzerland, where these misfortunes had befallen him, became hateful to him, and he passed the remainder of his days at Freiburg in the Breisgau. Yet he always took a warm interest in the city of his creation, and when he grew old and feeble, and felt that his end was approaching,

he placed Berne under the special protection of the Emperor Frederic II., who, at his instance, confirmed and extended its liberties and privileges in the celebrated charter known as the Golden Bull.

Among other things this instrument stipulated that Berne should never be separated from the empire; that it should have two annual fairs; that if a merchant were robbed during the fair, the emperor would punish the robber; that the emperor would never appoint a landammann, a priest, or a schoolmaster, but confirm those whom the city might name to him; that no burgher of Berne should ever be constrained to escort the emperor so far that he could not reach his own home before nightfall; that, when the emperor visited Berne, the city should find lodgings for him, his suite, and his knights; that wager of battle should be lawful; that the city should be empowered to coin money and judge offences; that it should be free from taxes; and that, finally, it should enjoy all the privileges possessed by the imperial city of Cologne.

Whether because of this charter or not, Berne flourished exceedingly. As the old chronicler Anselm says:

"The prophecies made about its greatness were accomplished. Little by little the Bear's claws grew strong and formidable; his mouth filled with terrible teeth; his eyes and ears became sharp and keen; he left his den to devour his neighbours and make war on his enemies; he conquered the eagle of Austria, and overthrew the bull of Burgundy."

In modern times a far nobler and more worthy destiny than any of these has been reserved for the city of Bear—that of being the capital of the freest of European states.

THE SILVER CHAIN.

THE SILVER CHAIN.

CHAPTER I.

STERN were the laws and strange the customs of the older Swiss cantons. Their criminal codes were of Draconian severity. Modern ideas of humanity, and of sympathy with the suffering, were slow in finding their way to the remote valleys and primitive communities of Helvetia; while antiquated beliefs and dark superstitions lingered there long after they had been banished from Western Europe. Nowhere were supposed wizards and witches more relentlessly persecuted than in Switzerland. In their zeal to put down sorcery the cantons of the new faith vied with those of the old. Going no farther back than the close of the seventeenth century,

we find that, in 1689, two women were beheaded, and one burnt alive, at Trogen, Appenzel, on a charge of witchcraft. In 1690, a poor creature of the name of Katherina Wetter was executed (her body being afterwards burnt) at the same place for a like offence. This woman was the last person put to death in Appenzel for sorcery; for it was afterwards found out (how is not stated) that her admission of having had dealings with the evil one was due to a diseased imagination, and had no foundation in fact. In other words, she was a woman of weak intellect, as were many of these supposed witches. In 1666 an entire family —mother, son, and daughter—were burnt alive at Alpnach, in Unterwalden, a Catholic canton, for practising forbidden arts. In 1701 a woman was burnt alive at Warterklugen, in Zurich, and seven other persons were beheaded, in the same Protestant canton, for a similar offence. In 1714, a supposed witch, a girl of sixteen, was burnt at the stake on the Heinzenberg, in Graubünden. But perhaps the most frightful tragedy recorded in the dark annals of witch persecution is one that befell, less than one hundred and fifty years ago, in the town of Zug. There lived there at

that time a weak-minded girl of seventeen, who, as is said, at the instigation of the Jesuits, denounced by name a number of her neighbours —old men of seventy, fathers and mothers of families, young men and maidens—as wizards, witches, and practisers of unholy rites. All whom she named were forthwith seized and put to the torture. A man and his daughter, who withstood the ordeal, were acquitted and set at liberty. A woman of the name of Liedenfrau, from Thurgau, though equally steadfast, was less fortunate. Rack and thumbscrew failing to extort from her any admission of guilt, she was thrust into a dark underground dungeon, and left to perish of cold, hunger, and her terrible hurts. Thirteen other women and girls, after being similarly tormented, and constrained thereby to own themselves guilty of deeds they had never done, were either strangled or burnt at the stake. The tongue of one of them, before her execution, was torn out with fiery pincers; another had her right hand hewn off, and her flesh burnt with red-hot irons. One of the victims was upwards of seventy. All this happened in the year of grace 1738, in the Catholic canton of Zug. But

to a Protestant community belongs the bad eminence of longest continuance in witch-harrying; for the last execution for sorcery in Switzerland took place at Glarus, in 1782.

It is generally supposed that the French revolution of 1789 dealt the practice of judicial torture its death-blow, and that nowhere in Europe did it survive the opening of the present century. This is an error. A man was racked in Zug so lately as 1824; and for several years thereafter the thumbscrew was in common use in this canton albeit—if that makes any difference—as a punishment after conviction, not as a means of extorting confession before trial. In the archives of Obwalden appears an entry, in 1840, of a payment of thirty shillings to the executioner for beating a prisoner (who had proved refractory under examination) with rods in the "torture-chamber." Even at so recent a date as 1855 this method of enforcing admissions of guilt seems to have been still in vogue; for in that year it is stated (in the public records of Obwalden) of a certain accused person that, "after being chastised with rods, the prisoner was cautioned that, if he did not answer more frankly, he would be

led back to the torture-room and severely handled; whereupon the examination was resumed."

Communities that tolerated the torture of unconvicted, and therefore presumably innocent, persons, did not, as may well be supposed, err on the side of tenderness in their treatment of proved evildoers. With few exceptions the primitive cantons, until far into the second half of the nineteenth century, retained the penal codes of the thirteenth, almost in their original integrity. Many of the sentences set forth therein are of an obviously ecclesiastical origin. Hence the object of nearly all of them is much more punitive and expiatory than deterrent or preventive. In 1851, a woman, convicted of incendiarism in Nidwalden, received this sentence: She was to stand on the Harterstein (stone of punishment, a sort of pillory) fifteen minutes, and, while the bells tolled a solemn peal, listen to the reading of her own sentence; on a certain Sunday to be conducted to the church of Stans, and there compelled to kneel before the pulpit during the delivery of a sermon on the sin of fire-raising; to pass five years in prison. After the expiration of her imprisonment she was to

go to church every holiday, attend morning and afternoon service every Sunday, and say her prayers in public every two months; to be deprived of all her privileges as a member of the commune; to be placed under the supervision of the police and her friends—the latter being ordered to provide for her maintenance. The husband of this woman—at whose instance she committed the crime that brought upon her so many punishments—was condemned to eight years' imprisonment; which does not seem to have been altogether to his liking, since he broke prison and fled to Berne. But, unfortunately for him, he fell into the hands of the police of that city, and was by them sent back to Nidwalden. There he was tried for contempt of his judges in presuming to escape, condemned to listen to the reading of his sentence, with the traditional bell-tolling accompaniment, and to stand fifteen minutes on the stone of punishment with a gag in his mouth; after which he was relegated to his dungeon to undergo the remainder of his sentence. In the same year, a girl of the name of Katharina Berthold, charged with speaking evil of dignities—to wit, of the cantonal authorities—

and "unseemly behaviour," was ordered to stand on the stone of punishment; to kneel in church while a discourse was preached on the enormity of her conduct; to be imprisoned for four months in chains in her father's house; for three years thereafter to stay at home at nights; and finally, when she went to church—and she was to go at least once every Sunday and holiday—to sit during the service on "the stool of repentance." A short time previously a man, convicted of manslaughter, was ordered, amongst other things, to visit on successive Sundays every parish church in the canton, and hear, on his marrow-bones, a long homily, prepared with special reference to himself and his misdeeds, which, so far at least as he was concerned, was aptly termed a "punishment sermon."

A still more remarkable survival of ancient customs was wager of battle, which, until within a comparatively recent period, was the lawful and accepted way of settling suits for slander, in the canton of Appenzel-Innerrhoden. A man who considered himself to have been slandered had the right to challenge his defamer to single combat under the following conditions: The fight must be

with fists; it must be fought under the open sky, never in a house; several witnesses were to be present to see fair play; the challenge to fight was to be in due form; both men were to be willing; the combatants were not to wear knuckle-dusters, or finger-rings, nor to give foul blows (strike below the belt). The first fighter fairly floored was held to have lost the wager, whereupon the men were separated by the witnesses, and all adjourned to the nearest alehouse to drink "the cup of peace." If the man challenged felt himself physically unfit for the contest, he could crave the intervention of the landweibel (a local magistrate), whose good offices in these circumstances generally succeeded in settling the matter in dispute, "without further trouble."

In no part of Switzerland used the punishment of convicted offenders to be more severe, or the treatment of suspected evildoers more harsh, than in this same canton of Appenzel. The practice of torturing accused persons, or rather (as this term might be supposed to imply that they were thumbscrewed or racked) the infliction on them of bodily suffering to induce confession, was in vogue only a few years back; nor did it, probably,

fall into complete desuetude until 1874, when the Federal Constitution, that year adopted, placed a general interdict on corporal pains and penalties, as well as on the punishment of death.

In the council-room of the old Rathhaus of Appenzel, there is, or was not long ago, an instrument locally known as the "bocksfutter." It consisted of a long bench, on which delinquents ordered to be punished with stripes, and prisoners who were obstinate about admitting their guilt, were wont to be placed, with legs and arms outstretched, as if they were going to swim. But any attempt to move these members was prevented by enclosing them in iron clamps firmly fastened to the bench. This preliminary completed, the executioner was called in, and ordered to give the victim as many strokes with an "ochsenziemer," on the bare body, as the judges might think necessary to loosen his tongue or purge him of his offence. Another so-called "truth-finder" (Wahreitserforschungsmittel) was the "cage." The cage was a cell under the roof of the Rathhaus, constructed of solid beams of timber, windowless, and so small that a tall man could neither stand upright nor stretch his legs in it. He must either

cower on the floor, or lie in a constrained position on the little truckle-bed which occupied one side of his den. Professor Osenbrüggen of Zurich mentions, in his "Culturhistorische Bilder aus der Schweiz," that, when he went through the Appenzeller Rathhaus, in 1862, he inquired of his conductor, a young woman—presumably the daughter of the housekeeper or gaoler—if confinement in the cage had not a powerful effect in constraining people to confess. "Ja," answered the maiden, with a matter-of-fact air; "they do not generally hold out long, especially in winter."

To understand the full import of this answer, it should be remembered that not only was the place unceiled, unwarmed, and unlighted, but that Appenzel is 2600 feet above sea-level, and that a north wind in these Alpine regions often brings with it cold of almost Siberian severity. A few days' solitary confinement in the cage in midwinter was probably not less effective in taming rebellious spirits than thumbscrew or rack. To escape so terrible an infliction, many men would confess to a great deal, whether they were guilty or not.

The abuse to which this method of "truth-

finding" was liable, and the sternness with which punishments in Appenzel were wont to be enforced, are illustrated in the following true story, which has suggested the present sketch and its title of "The Silver Chain."

CHAPTER II.

SOME thirty years ago—to be precise, in 1849—there were living in the commune of Monten, canton Appenzel, two girls, who bore the names respectively of Maria Koch and Mathilde Weber.

There is little distinction of rank in a primitive Swiss canton; and, albeit the Kochs were poor and the Webers rich, they belonged both to the class of yeomen-farmers, and the maidens were fast friends and frequent companions. Anna Maria was the better-looking of the two. She had rosy cheeks, flaxen hair, a creamy skin, blue eyes, and, though under twenty, she was tall and well-built, and possessed the physical development of a woman of five-and-twenty. Mathilde, on the other hand, was rather short and slight, and somewhat plain of feature, yet kind and amiable withal,

a great favourite with her parents and beloved by her friends. She was envied too; for on high days and holidays, when she donned the gay folks' dress of Appenzel, she bore on her breast a bigger and finer silver chain than any maiden of her acquaintance could boast of. Maria Koch often looked wistfully at her friend's chain, for, in common with a few of the poorer girls of the valley, she lacked this token of wealth. A silver chain, moreover, was regarded not merely as an ornament; it was supposed to act in some measure as a charm—to help its wearer to win a hochzeiter (sweetheart), and, when won, keep him faithful to his troth. In this respect, however, Mathilde Weber's silver chain had done her scant service. It had not brought her a single offer, while her friend was betrothed to a fine young fellow of the name of Conrad Oberwald, who had probably found in her rosy cheeks and bright-blue eyes more attractive metal than in Mathilde's darker orbs and gayer apparel. Maria was nevertheless haunted by a fear that, until she too possessed a breast-chain, her sweetheart's constancy would not be assured—that some richer, if less comely, rival might deprive her of his love.

This was the state of things in the summer of 1849.

On June the seventeenth of that year, a bevy of the fairest maidens of Gonten were gathered under the friendly shade of a leafy lime-tree in the outskirts of the village. All were attired in their "Sunday best," and the breasts of most of them were brilliant with heavy silver chains; for it was Corpus Christi day, a high Church festival, and a general holiday.

"Who is going to church?" said one of the girls.

"I, and I, and I," answered several.

"I am waiting for Mathilde Weber," said Maria Koch. "We agreed to go together, and she said she would come this way round. We were to meet here by the lime-tree."

"If she does not come soon, you'll be late," observed another of her companions. "I am going to start now; it's too warm to walk fast."

"I saw Mathilde Weber last night," put in Hilda Yodel, a bright-looking girl with mischievous black eyes, "behind Hans Ochsenbein's garden, *and she was walking with somebody.*"

The last words were delivered with marked emphasis and a significant look at Maria Koch.

"Who was it, who was it?" asked half-a-dozen eager voices.

"Guess."

"How can we guess? It was not surely——"

"Yes. It was Conrad Oberwald."

"It's a lie," broke in Maria impetuously; "and you know it's a lie, Hilda Yodel!"

"Lie for you, Fräulein Koch! Keep your lies to yourself! Do you suppose my eyesight is not better than your ignorance? And why should not Conrad and Mathilde take a walk together behind Hans Ochsenbein's garden, or anywhere else, if it pleases them? What is it to you, I should like to know?"

"Here is Mathilde coming," said another girl; "we'll tell her what you say."

"Tell her," answered Hilda defiantly; "she'll not deny it."

When Mathilde neared the group, she was met with a chorus of questions.

"Were you walking with Conrad Oberwald last night? Hilda Yodel says she saw you with

Maria Koch's hochzeiter, Mathilde, close to Hans Ochsenbein's garden. Is it true?"

"Quite true," said Mathilde simply. "He overtook me by Naegele's house, and we went the length of the garden together, talking about Maria here" (with a smile), "and he gave me a message for her, which I will tell her afterwards."

"Is that all?" remarked one of the elder girls indignantly. "It's just like you, Hilda Yodel, trying to stir up mischief, saying you saw Conrad and Maria courting."

"That may have been your thought," answered Hilda pertly; "but it was not my saying. All that I said was that I had seen them walking together. How long have walking and courting been the same thing?"

"It is what you meant, anyhow."

"That is what you say, Fräulein. But if it is all the same to you, I will be judged by my own words, and not by your opinion of my meaning. And now I am going to church. The bells will have done tolling in five minutes."

On this the group broke up into twos and threes, and all moved off in the direction taken by Hilda Yodel. Mathilde and Maria went together.

Since the latter had so fiercely given Hilda the lie, she was silent and preoccupied, and had borne no part in the subsequent conversation.

The châlet of the Webers was some distance from the village, and after service Maria excused herself from returning with her companions directly to Gonten, on the plea that she was going to set Mathilde on her way home. An hour or two later Maria reappeared in the village, and in the evening went to church a second time, where, meeting Hilda Yodel, she expressed to her great disappointment that Mathilde Weber had not come again to service, as she had promised.

"She has perhaps other fish to fry," said Hilda, with one of her meaning smiles. "Nobody can make me believe that, with such a breast-chain as that, she cannot have a hochzeiter if she likes. I should not wonder if she had one already. Now, has not she, Maria? You know; she tells you all her secrets, I am sure she does."

"I know nothing either of Mathilde Weber or her concerns," answered the other angrily; and, refusing Hilda's proffered companionship, she walked off alone.

"She has not forgotten this morning," muttered

Hilda. "She is jealous yet. Have those two been quarrelling, I wonder? I should not be surprised. The best friends are often the first to fall out."

CHAPTER III.

THE next day was one of great excitement in Gonten. Early in the morning it began to be rumoured that Mathilde Weber was missing, and before noon her father appeared in the village to beseech the help of his neighbours in looking for his daughter. She had gone to church, he said, the previous morning, and had not returned. He and several others had sought for her all night, but as yet without the slightest success; and they feared some evil had befallen the girl.

One of the first persons questioned was Maria Koch. She was the missing maiden's particular friend, and the last person seen in her company. The account she had to give was simple and straightforward. They had gone together, she said, after leaving church, to a point on the way

to the Webers' house, which she described. There they had parted, and Maria, as her parents could testify, was at home to dinner not much later than the usual hour.

Had Mathilde, she was asked, expressed any intention of going elsewhere than straight home? None whatever, she answered; and nobody could be more surprised than herself to hear that she had disappeared.

This deepened rather than helped to clear up the mystery; nor, in spite of the efforts that were made, was any light thrown upon it during the remainder of the week. The distracted parents, although they sought far and near, and had the aid of many friends and the cantonal police, found not the slightest clue to their daughter's fate.

On the Sunday morning following, the young girls of the village bent on church-going, met, as usual, under the lime-tree. Their conversation ran naturally on the disappearance of Mathilde Weber. It was the all-absorbing subject of the day—people talked of little else.

"Poor Mathilde!" said one, "I hope she has come to no harm. If she had run away she would surely have been heard of before this time."

"Why should she run away?" demanded another. "Folks don't run away when they have done no wrong; and nobody ever did say, or could say, aught against Mathilde. There was not a better girl in all Appenzel, let alone Gonten."

"If anybody knows anything about her, it's Maria Koch," observed Hilda Yodel decisively. "She cannot miss knowing; she was with her the last."

"Here she comes; let us ask her."

"And, as sure as I am a sinner, with a new silver chain on her breast! Where can she have got it? Her father is too poor to buy her one—that everybody knows."

The moment the object of these remarks came within earshot, she was warmly wished joy of her new acquisition, and eagerly asked how she had come by it.

"Conrad Oberwald gave it me," she answered.

"Well done, Conrad!" exclaimed several voices. "He is a hochzeiter worth having! I wish there were more like him."

"I wish I had a chain like that," said Hilda Yodel, eyeing the ornament curiously, and testing its thickness with her finger and thumb. "There

is not a finer in the commune. If poor Mathilde had not taken hers with her I should almost think you had borrowed it, Maria."

"How could it be Mathilde's?" answered the other angrily, while her face turned from red to pale, and to red again. "Conrad gave it me, I tell you, on Friday—no, yesternight. He always said he would give me one—like—like Mathilde's—and this is it—and it is like Mathilde's; but that does not make it hers. It is mine, I tell you."

"Well, I did not say it was not. There is nothing to get in a temper about, that I can see. But is it not time we were going to church? Will you walk with me, Maria?"

"No; I am going with Gretchen Langbein," said Maria, with an air which plainly told that her wrath was far from being appeased.

"Well, then, I shall go with Katherina Keinhosen. But just look here, Maria; if I had been you, I don't think I should have chosen the first Sunday after my friend's disappearance, and maybe death—for there's many a one that thinks she has been foully murdered—to sport a fine new silver chain, just as if you did not care. Come along, Katherina."

And before Maria, who seemed choking with rage, could find words to answer, Hilda and her friend were on their way to church, whither the rest of the fair throng shortly followed them.

While this was going on, a band of merry children were playing and gathering wild-flowers in a wood, about midway between Gonten and the châlet of the Webers. Through the wood ran a pellucid stream. Though it nowhere attained the dignity of a river, the stream formed here and there deep pools, sometimes calm and silent, but oftener swirling round with the impulse of the incoming water, and foam-crested. While hot in chase of a swarm of golden-hued butterflies, the children came suddenly on one of these pools. Except on one side, it was hemmed in by rocks and overshadowed by trees.

The butterflies fluttered over the brook, and as their pursuers could no longer follow them, they began a busy quest after flowers and wild strawberries.

A bold boy of twelve lay down on the brink of the pool, and reached out his arm to pluck a forget-me-not.

Uttering a cry of horror, he bounded to his feet.

"*Gott im Himmel!* what is that?" he shouted, as with outstretched arm he pointed to the seething water.

His companions gathered round him, and, trembling with fear, looked down into the pool. They saw there an awesome sight—a draped human figure, with a ghastly face, wide-open eyes, and long dark hair, moving swiftly round in the swirling water. Round and round it went—sometimes hidden from view by drooping trees and the projecting bank, but returning ever and anon to the middle of the pool, and gazing into the sunlight with lack-lustre orbs.

One look was enough. The children—some of them too terrified to speak, others sobbing and wringing their hands—turned, with one accord, from the spot and fled. They ran out of the wood to the footpath which skirted it, and thence into the road leading to Gonten; nor did they stop until they met a group of people coming from church, to whom one of them, more eager than the rest, announced that they had seen a ghost in the Wassertobel.

"No," said the sturdy little fellow who had first seen the body, "it's no ghost; it's a woman's corpse. I could tell by her clothes and her long hair."

"It's more likely a log of wood that has frightened you," said one of the men who heard the story. "They are often very queer-shaped, those logs of wood; and when they are bobbing about in the water, with a lot of weeds on the top of them, they look for all the world like a christian."

"It's no log of wood either," answered the lad. "Logs of wood don't have petticoats and eyes and hair, do they? Do you think I don't know a woman from a log?"

"Let us go and see," said another. "It is not far to this Wassertobel. Perhaps the children are right after all."

"We are right; anyway I am right," put in the youth defiantly. "You see if I am not. Come along!"

Whereupon they all moved off together—some five or six men, and nearly as many girls and women—towards the Wassertobel.

One glance sufficed to show that the children

were right. It was a body; and when, with the help of a branch cut from a tree, it was drawn to the side, and lifted from the water, all present recognised the body as that of Mathilde Weber!

"Poor Mathilde!" said one of the men pityingly. "Who could have thought that a girl like her, with kind parents, and everything to make life happy, would make away with herself?"

"Are you sure that she did make away with herself?" asked Hilda Yodel.

"You surely don't think that——"

"That she has been murdered. Well, I hope she has not; but what has become of her chain? It was so firmly fastened that it cannot have been lost in the water. And look here" (pointing to the front of the drowned girl's dress), "it has been torn off. See how her gown is rent, and the gatherings burst. It has required a strong pull to do that."

"That is clear," said one of the men. "It is a case for the Statthalter. Let us take the poor thing home to her father and mother; and after that some of us will go and tell the police."

And then they made a bier of branches, and,

reverently laying the poor girl's body thereon, carried it to her parents' house.

A few hours later, a constable, accompanied by Herr Weber, waited on Maria Koch, and asked to see the silver chain which she had worn that morning at church. Weber at once identified it as that of his daughter. It was of peculiar make, bore certain marks, which he knew; and he could, he said, swear to it anywhere. Asked how she came by the chain, Maria told the same story that she had told her companions early in the day—it had been given to her by her sweetheart, Conrad Oberwald.

Before midnight Conrad Oberwald was arrested and lodged in the dungeon at Appenzel Rathhaus, on a charge of murder.

CHAPTER IV.

VERY few people in Gonten or Appenzel felt any doubt as to Conrad Oberwald's guilt. The few who, at the outset, had contended that Maria Koch was the real culprit could not resist the arguments of those who believed in her innocence and her sweetheart's guilt, supported as they were by several telling facts and considerations. How, it was asked, *could* Maria have thrown Mathilde into the Wassertobel? It was some distance from the road to the footpath; and though she was the stronger it was not conceivable that she could have dragged the other, in open day, through the wood, robbed her of her chain, and drowned her in the pool. A strong man might do such a deed—hardly a young girl. What more probable theory could be suggested

than that Conrad, who was seen in Mathilde's company the night before, had waylaid her as she went home from church, after parting with Maria, persuaded her to walk with him in the wood, and then accomplished his purpose? It was also plausibly urged that the very fact of Maria wearing the chain the very first Sunday after the festival of Corpus Christi was alone a strong proof of her innocence. Had she herself either murdered Mathilde, or been in any way privy to the murder, she would hardly, being presumably of sane mind, have openly displayed her plunder within three or four days of its acquisition.

This, at least, was the popular view of the case. It was also the view of the police and magistrates of the canton, who, on the grounds stated, assumed Conrad's guilt from the first. There is, however, a wide difference between assumption and proof, and the evidence against the prisoner, either direct or circumstantial, was weak in the extreme. It rested entirely on Maria Koch's assertion that he had given her the silver chain. But it was clearly impossible to convict a man on the testimony of a witness who, on a

certainly not impossible (however improbable) supposition, had the strongest imaginable motive to swear falsely—the saving of her own life. Unless, therefore, other evidence should be forthcoming, or Conrad could be induced to confess, the prosecution was likely to fail. Hence the most strenuous efforts were made to extort a confession; for of further evidence there was little hope. The prisoner was examined and questioned, time after time, by the Wochenrath (police-court), and always with the same result. He stubbornly refused to make any admission of guilt, saying roundly that if Maria Koch said he had given her Mathilde Weber's silver chain, or any other chain, she lied. He was then ordered to be flogged with an ordinary whip; and this aid to confession failing of its intended effect, he was fastened to the bocksfutter, and cruelly flagellated with a piece of stiff ox-hide. Still Conrad protested his innocence. The court next ordered him to be bound hand and foot, and clapped in the cage under the roof of the Rathhaus. This was the hardest trial of all; but nothing could shake the man's constancy. He remained as firm as ever in his resolution—not

to tell the truth, the judge maintained—not to tell a lie, he said. This went on for several months—alternate floggings, bocksfutterings, and imprisonments (generally with hands and feet bound together) in the cage; and one way and another, Conrad, a man of fine proportions and strong constitution, was reduced to a shadow of his former self. Yet nothing seemed able to subdue his spirit; and the Wochenrath began to think they would have to let him go, after all, and that the murder of Mathilde Weber was one of the many crimes reserved for punishment in some other world than this.

Meanwhile Maria Koch, if her looks did not belie her, was little less wretched than her lover. She waxed thin; her cheeks lost their roses; her eyes seemed to grow larger, and, when she was suddenly greeted, they took an almost painfully-startled expression. She shunned her old companions, and could never be persuaded to talk about Mathilde and Conrad. This occasioned no surprise. No wonder Maria Koch looked ill, people said. Her hochzeiter was shut up in a dungeon at Appenzel, on a charge of murdering her dearest friend; and she knew, as everybody

else knew, that he would only leave it for the scaffold and a shameful death. How could she help feeling wretched? No wonder was it either that she would never go near the Wassertobel; that she would go a long way round to avoid it. What could be more natural? And there were other folks besides Maria Koch that would walk a mile or two out of their way rather than pass the Wassertobel after nightfall. The place was uncanny. Had not Andreas Jud the goatherd, one night when it was light of moon, seen a white figure sitting on the edge of the pool? and were there not others that had seen the same?

With very few exceptions indeed, the popular persuasion of Conrad's guilt was as strong in October as it had been in June. Chief among the dissidents were Hilda Yodel and Frau Flimm, wife of the landweibel (a sort of sheriff, and keeper of the Rathhaus). Hilda, who had closely watched Maria, both at the time of Mathilde's disappearance and since, had drawn conclusions decidedly unfavourable to that young woman's innocence of her friend's death. Frau Flimm, from her observation of Conrad, had arrived at precisely the same conclusion.

Appenzel being a small canton its public officers have to fulfil divers functions; and when —as often happened—the landweibel was away, his wife had to look after the prisoners in the Rathhaus. It thus came to pass that she was brought frequently in contact with Conrad. At first, like everybody else, she believed in his guilt; and more than once, when she took him his food, she had exhorted him to confess.

"Tell the truth like a man," she said. "You will have to tell it sooner or later, or they will find it out in some other way, and anything is better than suffering as you suffer. Why, you are always being either bocksfuttered or shut up in the cage. I'd liefer have my head chopped off at once, if I were you. Besides, if you confess they may let you off with a long term of imprisonment."

To this suggestion Conrad simply replied that, being innocent of the crime imputed to him, he could not admit that he was guilty. In the end Frau Flimm believed him, and did all that lay in her power to keep up his spirits and render his imprisonment as tolerable as, in the circumstances, was possible. Her conviction of Oberwald's

guiltlessness was confirmed by Maria Koch's manner, when she called at the Rathhaus to inquire about him, as she always did when she came to Appenzel. Most people looked on these visits as a proof of the girl's constancy and affection; but the Frau Landweibel and Hilda Yodel, who frequently communed with each other on the subject, held that the visits were a mere blind, kept up solely to sustain the belief in her innocence, and, incidentally, in her lover's guilt.

As Frau Flimm pointed out to Hilda, it was a suspicious circumstance that, albeit Maria was so particular in inquiring after Conrad, she never cared to see him—had, indeed, several times refused to see him when the landweibel's wife had proposed to take her to his cell. Neither was her behaviour in other respects on these occasions that of one with conscience void of offence. Her visits were always of the shortest. She could never look Frau Flimm in the face; and her whole bearing, besides showing that her self-imposed duty was extremely disagreeable to her, betokened a mind ill at ease.

After long cogitation, and taking frequent counsel with Hilda Yodel—the only person who

shared her belief in Oberwald's innocence—she resolved to try the experiment of surprising Maria into an admission of the truth the very next time she called to ask after her lover.

A few days afterwards the girl, as Frau Flimm expected, came to the Rathhaus, and, in her usual hesitating manner, and with averted gaze, inquired "how Conrad was doing?"

"Badly, very badly," answered Frau Flimm, looking sternly at her questioner. "They had him on the bocksfutter again yesterday; now he is in the cage up there in the dark—hands and feet roped together—and you know how cold it is. How the poor fellow shivered and moaned when I went to see him an hour since! I think Conrad is like to die, Maria Koch!"

"To die, Frau Flimm!" exclaimed the girl, trembling all over. "Conrad like to die!"

"Yes, die!" thundered Frau Flimm. "You are going to kill him, as you killed Mathilde Weber!"

"I kill Mathilde? No, no! Do not say so—it is not true!" muttered Maria, turning deadly pale, and leaning against the wall for support.

"Yes, you! Do you think I cannot see, that

I cannot read your guilt in your face? And is there not a God in heaven? Does not He know? Do you want to have another murder on your conscience? Confess, girl, and save your soul! You drowned poor Mathilde, and took her chain!"

"I did, Frau Flimm! God forgive me, I did!" and the girl, sobbing convulsively and covering her face with her hands, sank down on the floor. "But oh," starting up, and laying her hands on Frau Flimm's shoulders, "don't tell, don't say anything to the landweibel! They will cut my head off, if you do, and I don't want to die—oh, I don't want to die!"

"I hope they won't do that," said the other pityingly, for her woman's heart was deeply touched by the girl's terrible agitation and wretchedness; "but I shall be obliged to tell, if it is only for Conrad's sake. Besides, it is my duty. I am the landweibel's wife, you know."

"But not to-day, *liebe* Frau Flimm, not to-day, please—not to-day! I want to go home to my mother. I have been buying-in for her. Let me go, Frau Flimm. I will come back to-morrow and give myself up to the landweibel; I will indeed! Do, please, let me go!"

As she spoke, the girl moved towards the door. Frau Flimm pushed her back.

"Not so, Maria, not so. I must tell the landweibel, and I cannot let you leave the Rathhaus. You will have to stay here to-night. I will send word to your mother."

"Let me go, I tell you!" shouted Maria, who was now bitterly regretting having allowed herself to be surprised out of her secret, and almost wild with fear. "Let me go! I will go! Stand aside, or I shall hurt you!"

And then she shook herself free from Frau Flimm's grasp and made a second turn for the door. The girl was tall and strong and desperate; she struggled fiercely to gain her end; and had they been left to themselves would have been much more than a match for her opponent. But the latter shouted for help; and, as she fell exhausted on the floor, her husband ran into the room.

"Seize her, hold her!" she exclaimed, pointing to Maria. "She is a murderess! She killed Mathilde Weber; she has told me herself. Seize her!"

Then there was another struggle; for the girl

refused to yield even to the landweibel; and she made so determined a resistance that, before she could be secured and placed in a cell, he had to call for further help.

When Maria was brought before the examining judge the next day, she retracted her confession, or, rather, denied having made any; but a night in the cage loosened her tongue, and she made a full avowal of her guilt. The story was soon told. Greed and jealousy were her motives. She was afraid Mathilde would rob her of her lover, and she coveted her silver chain. On Corpus Christi day, as they were going home from church, she contrived, by pretending that she had lost her paternoster in the wood a short time previously, to get her friend near the Wassertobel. When they reached the brink she pushed the poor girl in, at the same time tearing the tempting ornament from her breast. She thought the body would sink to the bottom and never be seen again. In saying Conrad Oberwald had given her the chain, she had no idea, she said, of bringing him into the trouble; but when the murder came out, she dared not tell that it was her doing, and so

kept silence and let her lover bear the blame.

The method of procedure in criminal cases in Appenzel, at the time in question, was as peculiar and old-fashioned as any other institution of the canton. The examination was conducted by a court called the Wochenrath. It had the power of putting refractory prisoners to the torture, as poor Conrad Oberwald found to his cost. By increasing the number of judges, it could constitute itself, in certain contingencies, a Blutrath (Council of Blood), and try serious cases. But the power of life and death was vested in the Great Council of the canton, by whom all capital cases, in the last resort, were heard and decided. Their proceedings were conducted in public—literally "with open doors." The examinations of the Wochenrath, on the other hand, were held with closed doors. The official designation of the Public Prosecutor was Reichsvogt—Imperial Bailiff—a name that had come down from the time when Appenzel formed a part of the Holy Roman Empire. The appointed defender of the prisoner was the Armenpfleger, or overseer of the poor. When

these men had made an end of speaking, it was the custom for the Landammann, who presided over the council, to inquire if any minister of God or kinsman of the accused desired to say a word on his behalf. If no kinsman answered to the call, the accused would beseech the Church, "which thirsteth not after blood," to plead with his earthly judges to temper their justice with mercy. The hearing over, the prisoner was removed, the court cleared, and the case debated with closed doors. A majority decided. In the event of an equality of votes, the casting vote was always given in favour of acquittal. The sentence was pronounced with open doors. If the prisoner's doom was death, the great bell tolled a solemn peal, the Landammann broke his staff in twain, and threw the pieces among the people, with the words: "As he finds no mercy here, so may God forgive him hereafter." The execution followed swiftly on the sentence, the condemned being taken straight from the place of judgment to the scaffold, and there beheaded.

There were, however, at times some strange exceptions. When a woman was condemned to death for infanticide, and the Franciscan sisters of

Appenzel volunteered to take charge of the poor creature and "better her"—an offer they never failed to make—their offer was accepted, as a matter of course, and the sentence remitted. On one occasion a sentence of death was commuted into a sentence of imprisonment, because a peasant, who had a fine meadow full of grass near the place of execution, represented to the council that the crowd would trample it down and cause him a heavy loss. Another time this order of things was reversed. It had been arranged to confine a convict, condemned to penal servitude for life, in a prison at St. Gall—Appenzel being short of accommodation at the time—but when it was found that the place destined for him had been bespoke, and that the St. Gall people could not take him in, the Great Council reconsidered the case, ordered the man to be beheaded—and beheaded he was.

On the 27th of November, 1849, the Wochenrath held an Assize of Blood, and declared Anna Maria Koch guilty, on her own confession, of having murdered Mathilde Weber. In anticipation of sentence to death being passed on her by the Great Council she was diligently visited by

several priests and exhorted to repentance; but she stubbornly refused their ministrations, saying she could not, and would not die.

On the 3rd of November the Great Council met in the Rathhaus to decide whether she should live or die. After the case for the prosecution had been stated by the Reichsvogt, the Armenpfleger said what he could in extenuation of her offence, for to gainsay it in the face of her own confession was clearly impossible. Then the Landammann asked if any of the prisoner's kinsfolk had aught to urge on her behalf. On this her father and her sister made a piteous appeal for mercy, and the council proceeded to judgment. By a majority of ninety-two to six they condemned Maria Koch to death, and ordered her to be taken forthwith to the place of execution, and there beheaded.

When the wretched girl saw the Landammann break his staff, and heard the dread sound of the knell which told her doom, she uttered shriek after shriek, and it required the utmost efforts of four strong men to bind her and carry her to the scaffold. There she had a desperate struggle with the headsman and his helpers, and it was long before she could be forced down and fastened to

the block. And even when that was done she managed to thrust her neck between her shoulders in such a way that the executioner was unable to perform his office. All the time she uttered the most heartrending cries, and the Reichsvogt (who was superintending the execution), completely bewildered and unmanned, sent a message to the Great Council, asking what must be done. The answer was short and stern: "Let the doomster do his duty."

On this the condemned, who had drawn from the delay hopes that her life might even yet be spared, renewed her struggles, and her cries were more terrible than before. She broke her bonds, and had to be fastened a second time to the block. Then a grey old man, who had served in foreign wars, stepped from the crowd and told the headsman to wind the girl's long hair round a pole in such a way that, being stretched to her full length by his helpers, she could be firmly held, and thereby hindered from shifting about and contracting her neck. This was done. With a single stroke Maria Koch's head was severed from her body; and thus the agonising scene, which had lasted two hours, came to an end.

This execution made a great sensation in Switzerland, and was probably one of the causes that led to the abolition of capital punishment, by Federal enactment, in 1874. True, the right of life and death has since been restored to the cantons, but the privilege is not one of which they are likely to make extensive use.

Conrad Oberwald never quite recovered from the effects of his confinement in the cage and his flagellations on the bocksfutter. The canton refusing to make him any pecuniary compensation for his sufferings, a public subscription was got up for him in Appenzel and St. Gall, which produced a sum sufficient to enable him to buy a piece of land, settle in life, and marry Hilda Yodel, who had believed in Conrad's innocence, and spoken a good word for him, when all the world was against him.

THE BATTLE OF THE WINDS.

THE

BATTLE OF THE WINDS.

CHAPTER I.

SUNNY MEMORIES.

In the neighbourhood of Altorf, in the historic canton of Uri, and near the highway between Amsteg and Erstfeld, there was to be seen, not very long ago, a charming little châlet. It stood in the middle of a green meadow, bounded on one side by a sparkling brook, on the other by a broad belt of woodland, and in summer was almost hidden behind a leafy screen of fruit-laden vines and trailing rose-trees. When, in early morning, the sun rose above the Alps, lighting up the dark pine wood with a golden glory, dyeing the meadow a brighter emerald and the roses a richer scarlet, it was like a scene in fairyland, or the realisation of

a poet's dream of an earthly paradise. Travellers passing that way from the mountains or the lake, however great their hurry, rarely failed to take a long look at the little châlet, its vines, its rose-trees, and its meadow, its pointed gables, carved galleries, and laughing rivulet; and many of them, as they wiped the perspiration from their brows, and continued their journey along the dusty road, prayed heaven that it might be their lot to pass the rest of their lives in the enjoyment of that peace of mind with which, as they thought, the dwellers in so lovely a spot must surely be blessed.

So much for the outside: and now, using a story-teller's privilege, let us open the door and see what is going on inside this highly-favoured dwelling.

The principal apartment, which has the appearance of serving at once as a sitting-room and superior kitchen, occupies nearly the whole of the ground-floor of the house. It is well furnished: the chairs are of black oak; there are several richly-carved chests and settles; a great porcelain stove stands in one corner, and the well-waxed oaken floor shines like a mirror. Everything betokens the châlet to be the dwelling of a well-

to-do peasant—of a man, that is to say, who owns the land he cultivates—one of a class happily abundant in Switzerland, a class that constitutes the bone and sinew of the country.

The table is set for breakfast. It is covered with a cloth of snowy whiteness, whereon repose a jar of honey, a huge loaf of bread, a great jug of milk, and an old-fashioned silver coffee-pot.

The inmates of the room are two—a man and a woman, husband and wife. The woman, whose name is Helena, is young and shapely, tall and handsome. Her eyes are large and dark, her hair is black and luxuriant; and were it not that her countenance is disfigured by pride, anger, and obstinacy, it would, beyond a doubt, be beautiful and prepossessing. She looks at her husband, who is gazing intently through the lozenge-shaped panes of the lattice window, as if mutely inviting him to breakfast; but he takes no heed, and she, either disdaining to ask or fearing to speak, sits down to the meal alone. Nevertheless, she seems ill at ease, eats without appetite, and from time to time casts a glance at her husband more defiant than loving; and her whole manner indicates

that she would greatly prefer a storm, however violent, to so unnatural a calm. Meanwhile Arnold Beckenried, for so is the husband called, continues looking through the window, as if there were nobody in the room but himself. Yet though he looks he sees nothing, for his gaze is turned inward, and his thoughts are busied with the past. He goes over in his mind the principal events of his life, thinks of the time when, after he was left a poor orphan without the means of subsistence, Walter Trogen had compassion on him, set him in summer to watch his flocks on the Alps of Unterwalden, and in winter sent him to the village school. When he neared man's estate, Siegfried, the master boatman of Sisikon, whose attention had been attracted by the lad's stalwart proportions, and his confidence won by his comely countenance and bold bearing, advised him to leave the mountains and seek his fortune on the lake, offering to give him charge of one of his boats and teach him his calling. This offer the young shepherd gladly accepted. He went to Sisikon, entered Siegfried's service, and speedily became one of the most expert boatmen on the lake.

The life pleased him; he loved the open air, delighted in movement and danger, and the independence of his new vocation was congenial to his character. After a few years spent with Siegfried, he had saved enough money to buy himself a boat, and was thenceforth his own master.

One day, when he was looking out for a fare at Bauen, whither he had just taken some passengers and a small cargo from Sisikon, an old man and a young girl came down to the jetty and asked to be rowed to Flüelen. Arnold was not the only boatman present, and several others offered their services; but the young girl, after a single glance at his face, stepped on board his little craft, and the old man followed without a word. During the passage it came on to blow a little, as it oftens does on the Lake of the Four Cantons, of which Lake Uri forms the southern extremity, and though the young lady (for she was well and even expensively dressed, and her manner gracious and refined) showed some signs of fear, the dexterity with which Arnold handled the boat quickly reassured her. When they arrived at Flüelen she thanked him with the sweetest smile that, he thought, he had ever seen

on mortal face; while the old man complimented him handsomely on his skill, and said that whenever he or his daughter had occasion to go on the lake they would have no other boat than his and no other boatman than himself.

They told Arnold at Flüelen that his passengers were Hans Hittenberg and his daughter Helĕna. Hans was one of the richest peasants in Uri; he had a large farm of his own, many mountain pastures, and, it was rumoured, much money out at interest. Hence Helena, being his only child, was for that country a great heiress, and might, had she chosen, have mated with a wealthy landowner or a prosperous merchant. But her father, who had lost his wife many years before, loved his daughter so passionately that he could not bear the idea of parting with her, and was much more likely to repulse than to encourage suitors for her hand, however personally eligible they might be. But Helena had been so used to having her own way (her father had spoiled her so much, and she was so high-tempered and self-willed), that it was not to be expected, if she did take a fancy, that she would be restrained from gratifying it either by con-

siderations of prudence or of filial duty. Hans knew this, and when he thought of his increasing infirmities, of what the future might have in store for his darling, and of the difficulty of controlling her, his mind seriously misgave him.

After the meeting at Bauen and the journey to Flüelen, Hans Hittenberg and his daughter made frequent use of Arnold's boat on their goings to and fro on the water. The lake of Uri seemed suddenly to have unfolded new beauties for Helena. She was ever finding excuses for journeys to Bauen, to Axen, to Seelisberg, and to Flüelen; she never could be persuaded to go thither by road when it was possible to go by water, and it generally was possible. On these occasions she was often accompanied by her father, sometimes by a servant, and now and then she went alone. She always felt safe, she told her father, in Arnold Beckenried's boat; and Hans was content, for he lived only in his child.

As for poor Arnold, from the very first moment he set eyes on the beautiful and wayward girl, he had been utterly and hopelessly in love with her. Her vivacity, her energy, her restlessness,

her very self-will even, had infinite charms for him. For a long time, however, Arnold did not dare to lift his eyes in love, much less declare his passion to Hans Hittenberg's daughter. How could he, a poor man, whose only fortune was his boat, hope to win the hand of the richest heiress in the canton? But being a mountaineer of Unterwalden and a free Switzer, and, therefore, like one of Abraham's children, subject to no man, he was too proud, and had too high a sense of his own dignity, to urge an impossible suit or cherish a hopeless love. So he resolved to sell his boat, leave his beloved Urner lake for ever, and seek his fortune in some other part of Switzerland, or, perhaps, in a foreign country.

Almost on the very day that Arnold arrived at this decision word was brought him at Flüelen that, at a certain hour next morning, Herr Hittenberg and his daughter would take passage in his boat as far as Bauen. He received this message with mournful satisfaction. He would see Helena for the last time, have an opportunity of telling her of his near departure, and bidding her a long farewell. She and her father had shown him great kindness, and it was only right

that he should pay his respects to them before he left the neighbourhood. As it fell out, however, Helena came alone. A sudden call of business at the last moment, she explained, had prevented her father from coming with her, and there was not time for the maid to make herself ready.

Arnold took his oars and Helena a place in the stern of the boat. They could thus look each other in the face. But Arnold did not profit by the opportunity; he dared not encounter the fascination of Helena's eyes, for fear they should make him waver in his resolution. So he bowed his head, planted his feet firmly, bent himself to his work, and the *Sunbeam* glided swiftly over the blue waters of the lake.

"There's a fair wind, Herr Boatman," remarked Helena, after a long silence. "Why not make sail? It will be ever so much more pleasant, besides being easier for you."

"*Ja wohl*, Fräulein," replied Arnold, without trusting himself to return the kindly glance shot at him by his charming fare.

And he stepped his mast, hoisted his little lug-sail, and shipped his rudder.

These arrangements rendered necessary a

change of position. He had to go to the stern, take the tiller, and keep an eye on the sail. Helena had to make way for him; but as she did not move many inches, they were now nearly *vis-à-vis*, and very close together. Arnold could not help feeling happy in spite of himself, and of the consciousness that his great resolve was in serious jeopardy. He stole a glance at his passenger as she spoke, with a kindly, almost, as he fancied (and his heart beat wildly at the thought), a loving look.

"You do not seem well to-day, Herr Boatman," observed the lady graciously. "Are you ailing?"

"No, mein Fräulein, I am quite well."

"Then you are not happy. You look discouraged; you are silent, and your face seems worn. What is the matter?"

"Nothing, mein Fräulein; there is nothing at all the matter."

"Come now, Herr Boatman, it is wrong to tell untruths, and you know that is an untruth. Anybody can see that you are either unwell or out of tune (*verstimmt*)."

"I did not know—I was not aware—that is, I did not think," stammered Arnold. Then des-

perately: "It is perhaps because I am going away; and the Urner see (lake of Uri) has been my home so long. It is sad to have to leave it. I do feel unhappy, mein Fräulein."

"Going away! Whither? what for?" exclaimed Helena, turning rather pale.

"Perhaps to the Boden see, or to be a boatman on the Rhine or Elbe. I am going to seek my fortune."

"Going to seek your fortune! Don't you think you could seek your fortune nearer home, Herr Beckenried?" said Helena, who, guessing which way the wind blew, thought, considering their relative positions, it was her duty to give Arnold just a little encouragement.

But Arnold, whose diffidence prevented him from taking advantage of the opportunity, made no answer.

"Your friends will be very sorry," continued Helena; "do you think you are acting wisely?"

"What friends? who cares enough for me, or my comings or goings, to be sorry that I should do this or that?"

"My father; I am sure he will be very sorry,"

said Fräulein Hittenberg, as she turned her head and hid her face with her sunshade.

"Only your father! You will not be sorry at all then, mein Fräulein?" asked Arnold, in a broken voice.

"Yes, Herr Boatman, I too shall be very sorry. But it is you who do not care for us, or you would not think of going away to seek your fortune when—when——"

Just then a gentle zephyr blew aside the sunshade, and Arnold saw that Helena was very pale, and that her beautiful eyes were filled with tears. This was a sight before which his fine resolution melted into nothingness, and throwing to the winds every consideration of prudence and pride, he gave heed only to the promptings of his heart.

"If I only thought, Fräulein," he exclaimed, in great agitation, "if I could persuade myself that you cared half as much for me as I care for you, I would stay by the Urner see for ever."

"And how do you know that I don't, Herr Boatman?" said Helena, smiling through her tears.

"Then you do, you do care for me; you do

love me a wee bit, mein Fräulein!" almost shouted the happy boatman, as he let go the tiller and grasped Helena's fairylike fingers in his great brown hands.

"No, Arnold Beckenried, I don't love you a wee bit." (Here Arnold's face, which had just expressed ecstasy, fell below the zero of despair.) "But don't look so miserable, you foolish man. I love you a great deal. There now, are you satisfied, or are you still determined to seek your fortune in a strange land?"

Arnold's answer was to let go one of her hands, put one arm round her waist, and press his lips to hers.

Then his countenance again looked troubled. "But——" he began.

"But," laughingly echoed the maiden, "are you still unhappy? What thought is troubling you now?"

"Your father. Will he allow his only daughter to mate with a poor boatman, who has not a rood of land he can call his own?"

"Oh, is that all?" answered Helena, with a slight toss of her head. "If you are poor, we are rich, and have enough for all. The good father

never says me nay, and he will not object to Arnold Beckenried for a son-in-law. I shall not stay long at Bauen; you must wait for me and take me back, and we will together tell the father that we are *verlobt* (affianced). I answer for his consent."

CHAPTER II.

DIVIDED LIVES.

HELENA was right. After a delicious day spent on the lake, the recollection of which never faded from the memories of either of them, they went to the châlet, and Arnold, in a manly straightforward way, asked Hans Hittenberg for his daughter's hand in marriage.

"He says he is poor, father," said Helena, in answer to an interrogative look from the old man; "but he is good, and we are rich, and I—and I, dear father, love him and he loves me."

"Not rich, child, not rich, only comfortable," interrupted Hans, who liked to be thought less well-off than he really was. "Thou might have done better, Helenchen" (little Helena), "and I

am not sure that I ought to give my consent to thy becoming the wife of a common boatman."

At these words Arnold rose from his chair, and looked rather fierce.

"Not so fast, Herr Beckenried, not so fast," continued the father, who had been speaking diplomatically, and was really well pleased at the turn things were taking. "It is surely no offence to say that Helenchen might do better than marry a boatman—all the more credit to thee for having won her—nor did I say I would not give my consent to your betrothal. But it must be on one condition—on one condition. Helenchen must not leave her old father, and, Arnold, you will have to quit the lake, and live with us here at the châlet."

Arnold, as may well be supposed, made no difficulty about accepting Hans Hittenberg's terms; yet, notwithstanding his love for Helena, it was not without a pang that he consented to abandon his free life on the Urner see, even to become a rich man's son-in-law, and the husband of a handsome heiress.

Hans, as we have observed, was well pleased, albeit he did not think it politic openly to say so.

The great object of his life was now all but achieved. If Helena married Arnold she could not well marry any other body, and he would not be deserted by his only child in his old age. For the rest, Arnold's character was irreproachable. He was a man without enemies; everybody would be rejoiced at his good fortune, and he could not fail to make Helenchen (as her father always called her) a good husband.

After a brief courtship they were married at Altorf. Half the countryside came to the wedding, and people thought the bridegroom the most fortunate of men, an opinion in which Arnold doubtless fully concurred. But as the glamour of the honeymoon wore off, and the hard realities of life began to make themselves felt, the young couple found out—what many another young couple has found out—that their happiness was not a happiness without alloy; and it gradually dawned on Arnold's mind that even in Châlet Hittenberg there was a cupboard with a skeleton in it; a skeleton that often threatened, and might some day destroy, the peace of their beautiful home —Helena's imperious temper and wayward self-will. So long as she had absolutely her own way,

and everybody in the house and about it practised the virtue of passive obedience and acknowledged the absolute authority of its mistress, all went well; but anything like opposition she would tolerate neither from her husband nor her father, and woe to the servant that ventured to remonstrate against her orders or omitted to obey her commands. For awhile Arnold submitted with loverlike docility to his fair tyrant; albeit, being a man with a mind of his own, there necessarily came a time when he felt himself constrained to rebel; whereupon unpleasant collisions occurred; and but for the watchfulness and moderating influence of the father—who knew his child's weakness, and how much his own mistaken indulgence had fostered it—there would have been bitter domestic strife and a divided household.

At length Hans Hittenberg passed from the scene, and was buried with his fathers; and it almost seemed as if the happiness of Arnold and Helena had been interred in the same tomb. For this, though the wife was chiefly in fault, the husband was by no means free from blame. He knew, or might have known before he married Helena, that she was a spoiled child, and as a

spoiled child he ought to have treated her. She loved him dearly, his influence over her was great, and by the use of gentle means, by the exercise of patience and firmness, by quiet reasoning and loving remonstrance, he might, perchance, have gradually weaned her from her wilfulness, hastiness, and impatience of opposition. The object was well worth the effort; for Helena had so many noble qualities, that, freed from these faults, she would have been a woman in ten thousand, a wife worthy of a monarch. But he preferred the strong hand to the oiled feather, stern reproof to the soft answer that turneth away wrath. He had often won his way through the fierce storms that sometimes lash into fury the lake of the Four Cantons, by sheer firmness of mind and force of will, and he thought to conquer his wife's temper by a similar display of energy. When this design was perceived by Helena, all the worst qualities of her nature were excited; her pride and obstinacy were alike aroused. She opposed Arnold out of sheer wilfulness, to show him, as she said to herself, that, though he was her husband, he should never be her master. Differences and disputes

became frequent, hot words were often bandied between them, and the love of their youth was in great danger of being replaced by open estrangement.

Arnold had long desired a more active life than the life of the châlet—where there was in truth too little scope for a man of his active and energetic temperament—and now that his father-in-law was dead he wanted much to buy a large dairy-farm in Unterwalden, and become a keeper of flocks and herds in his native mountains. But this project, without the co-operation of his wife, was impossible, for she inherited in her own right the whole of her father's property, and Arnold had no independent means of his own. Nevertheless, he went about the business as if Helena's consent had been given, or as if the price of the land he proposed to buy were already in his possession. This indiscreet proceeding, which in any circumstances would have been annoying, aggravated Helena almost past endurance; and she resolved that, come what might, she would neither consent to leave the châlet nor find money for the purchase

of the farm—a determination which led to their last and greatest quarrel.

On the morning on which our story opens the peasant proprietor from Unterwalden, with whom Arnold had been in treaty for the purchase of his house and fields, called at the cottage to ask for a final answer; whereupon Arnold, after saying that he accepted Herr Ritschard's terms, inquired of Helena, in a matter-of-course manner, when it would suit her convenience to go with him to the notary to complete the transaction.

"Never," was her prompt and impetuous answer; "never will I leave this house where I was born and bred, and where I passed the happy days of my maidenhood. As for the farm, that's your business; all that I know is, that no money of mine shall go to pay for land in Unterwalden, nor anywhere else. And I don't think it's any use your waiting, Herr Ritschard; Arnold cannot buy your land—the most he ever had was an old boat—and I won't."

At these words Herr Ritschard, a quiet old man, with a strong dislike for domestic broils, quietly took up his hat and went away.

Then Arnold, too indignant to speak, turned towards the window, and remained as if gazing through it—though in reality seeing nothing—for nearly an hour.

Meanwhile Helena, tired of waiting, had sat down to breakfast. Greatly irritated by Arnold's silence and abstraction, she at length gave way to her impatience.

"Are you going to stay there all day? Won't you have something to eat?" she asked, in a voice that tried to be conciliatory, but was not.

"No. I'm not hungry."

Then another interval of silence followed. Both seemed angry; but Arnold's anger was that of a resolute man, Helena's that of a wilful woman. She knew that a word would have reconciled them, yet this word she would not speak.

Again the silence was broken, this time by Arnold. He had resolved, and was now about to act.

"Where is Rudolf?" he asked.

"In his crib."

"At this hour?"

"He was so tired last night, I thought I would let him have a long sleep."

Arnold opened the door of a small bedroom. A bright little fellow, of some six years old, had just unclosed his eyes, as was evident from the fact that he was vigorously rubbing them with a pair of chubby fists. When he saw his father he uttered a cry of joy, and stretched out his hands to him. The latter, instead of taking the child in his arms and riding him on his shoulder, as was his wont, turned to his wife.

"Dress him," he said, in an imperious voice; "I am going out, and shall take him with me."

"Whither?"

Arnold looked at her fiercely for a moment, as if calculating the effect of the answer he was about to give.

"To Flüelen," he said, speaking slowly and deliberately. "Siegfried of Sisikon, my old master, is there, and goes to-day to Brunnen for cargo. I am going to ask him for a place as pilot or boatman. I am without money, you know; yet, though I have no longer a boat, I can earn my own living, and I will no longer be a burden on *anybody*."

Helena turned pale.

"But you are not going to-day?" she exclaimed.

"Yes, to-day, and at once."

"But the boy?"

"The boy will go with me and live with me. He shall be a boatman, like his father."

Helena would have broken out in reproaches and remonstrances, but there was that in Arnold's manner and his words which put a seal on her lips. She saw now, when too late, that she had pushed opposition and contradiction too far, and that in taunting her husband with his poverty before a stranger she had committed a fault that would not readily be forgiven nor soon forgotten. Her agony at the prospect of losing Arnold and the child was almost more than she could bear. She had to lean against the wall for support; she covered her face with her hands; she tried to speak, but could not. Yet amid all the mental torture she was undergoing, the greatest she had ever known, it never occurred to her to yield—to ask Arnold's forgiveness—to throw her arms round his neck—remind him of their ancient love, and entreat him to let them be to each other as they once had been. It did not seem to her as if she *could* humiliate herself to do this, even though the alternative should be

death; and rousing herself by a supreme effort, she silently obeyed her husband's behest.

When the child was ready Arnold took him by the hand and led him away. Helena, yielding to an impulse she was unable to resist, followed them to the garden-gate to give the little fellow a last embrace. She folded him convulsively in her arms, and gave him two or three passionate kisses.

"Good-bye, Helena," said Arnold.

And in his voice there was a softness, a touch of bygone tenderness, and the look that went with it was almost supplicatory. "Only speak, Helena," it seemed to say, "and all may yet be well." For a moment she hesitated; pride and love were struggling fiercely for the mastery; pride won; and turning slowly on her heel, Helena re-entered the châlet.

When she had closed the door behind her, and was once more alone, a flood of tears somewhat relieved her pent-up feelings. Yet they were more tears of anger and mortification than of sorrow and repentance, and with the sense of sadness that oppressed her was mingled a strong feeling of resentment against Arnold; for had he not

refused to yield to her wishes, and taken away her child? It was evident that Helena possessed no inward force or virtue whereby she might overcome the cardinal defect of her character. Only some external event—some crushing calamity—could give to her better nature the victory over the pride and wilfulness that had bereft her of her husband and her son, and left her a solitary woman in a desolate home.

Meanwhile Arnold and the boy were walking rapidly in the direction of Flüelen—too rapidly for Rudolf, for the day was warm, and the little man's legs were short.

Arnold was buried in painful thought. Helena's rejection of his last appeal had wounded him more deeply even than the open insult of the morning. Never, never, he said to himself, would he go back to her. Let her live alone with her pride, her wilfulness, and her wealth. He would resume his old calling. By working hard and saving hard he could soon earn enough to buy another boat, and by dint of perseverance and industry he might, perhaps, raise himself to a higher position, and leave Rudolf as well off as if he were to inherit all Hans Hittenberg's riches. He knew a kind

motherly body at Brunnen in whose charge he could place the child. He would see him every day, and have all his love; Helena should have no share in it. She had the money, he had the boy; and he felt himself the richer of the two.

Arnold, while thinking so much of his boy's future prospects had become quite oblivious to his present needs, and he continued to push on, almost forgetful of his companionship.

"Papa," said at length Rudolf, who had already tried vainly two or three times to attract his father's attention.

"Yes, Rudy," answered the other abstractedly.

"It's very hot, papa."

"So it is, my little man; but we shall soon be at Flüelen, and then we are going to have a sail in Siegfried's boat."

"Will you go too?"

"Yes, we are going together; do you suppose I would let you go alone?"

"Oh, won't it be nice! I'm so glad. But I say, papa."

"Yes, Rudy."

"Papa, if I was a big man like you, and you

was a little boy like me, do you know what I would do?"

"No; what would you do, Rudy?"

"I'd carry you on my back, papa."

"You would, would you, old man?" said Arnold, greatly delighted at this sally. "You deserve carrying, if it is only for saying that; and I will carry you, but in my arms, not on my back."

And the father, suiting the action to the words, lifted the lad from the dusty road, wiped the perspiration from his brow, and the two talked and laughed lovingly together until they reached Flüelen, when Arnold, after fondly kissing the lad, placed him once more on firm ground. Now that he had lost, or thought he had lost, the love of Helena, that of Rudolf had become more precious than life itself.

CHAPTER III.

THE RISING STORM.

ALL was quiet in Flüelen; one steamer had just left, and no other was in sight or expected; no tourists were departing for Airolo or Bellinzona, none were arriving from those parts, yet a group of fishermen were gathered near the jetty and engaged in earnest conversation. They seemed to be discussing matters of grave import, and now and again one of them would take a look round and upward, and then shake his head, as if something were brewing skyward which did not quite please him.

"I'll tell you what it is, Siegfried," one old fellow, conspicuous by his leathery skin, wrinkled face, and knowing look, was saying, "before an hour is over you'll havet he *föhn* behind you, and take my word for it, you won't find it easy to

reach Brunnen. You'd better stay where you are until the storm blows over." (The *föhn*, it may be as well to explain here, is the south wind; it blows sometimes with great violence for days together, and is much feared by the boatmen of the Swiss lakes. The *bise*, the north wind, is almost equally dreaded, especially in French Switzerland, where it is generally more violent than in the north and the east. Sometimes they are both blowing at the same time, the one in the upper the other in the lower air. When the point of contact is near the earth or the surface of a lake, the consequences are terrible: boats are dashed in pieces, rocks hurled from the mountain-tops, whole forests cut down, and houses unroofed, just as in a tropical cyclone.)

"That I will not, Andreas," answered Siegfried from Sisikon—a tall broad-shouldered man of about sixty, with a weather-beaten face, bright blue eyes, and an air at once genial and resolute. "Unless a *föhn* be a right bad one, I'm not afraid of it. I've been too long sailing on Uri lake for that; and from the look of things, this won't be a very bad one. Besides, we shall have the wind at our backs, you know."

"But I say it will be a bad one," grumbled Andreas. "Man and boy, I've been on the lake nearly seventy years, and I've never seen a surer sign of a strong *föhn* than this day, and——"

"Hullo! here comes Arnold Beckenried," interrupted Siegfried. "What news do you bring, Beckenried?"

"I'm glad to find you are not gone, Siegfried," replied the new comer, with a forced laugh. "If you'll ship me as pilot I'll go with you to Brunnen."

"To-day!" said Siegfried, with a surprised look; "why, you won't be able to get back before to-morrow."

"I don't want to get back at all; I'm going to take up my old calling and live at Brunnen again."

"Going to take up your old calling! *Donnerwetter*, if I had a wife and home like yours, Beckenried, it is not a boatman I'd be. What's the matter?" (with a wink at the others). "Has the handsome Helena given you the sack?"

At this suggestion Arnold almost lost his temper.

"Will you take me or not, Siegfried?" he

asked peremptorily. "If not, there are others who will."

"What, cannot you stand a joke, Beckenried? You used to be good-tempered enough. Take you? of course I will, and glad to do it. You shall pilot us to Brunnen. What think you of the weather? Andreas here says we shall have the *föhn* before long."

Arnold, who had been so busied with his own concerns that he had not given the weather a thought, looked towards the south. The sky was cloudless, and a casual observer would have detected nothing that betokened an approaching change of atmospheric conditions. The fog that in the early morning had shrouded the mountain-tops had almost disappeared, and the last shreds of it were drifting rapidly northward, a sign that might have seemed rather favourable than otherwise. This, however, was not Arnold's opinion.

"Yes," he said, shading his eyes with his hand, "we shall have the *föhn*; see, it is already in the upper air, and has driven the mist from the tops of the Frohnalp and Oberalp."

"And if you'll take my advice," said old

Andreas, "you'll go at once, if go you must. You'll maybe get to Brunnen before the storm breaks; you have that chance."

"You are right. Here, lads" (to his two men), "step into the boat and ship your oars, and see that all is in order. We may have a hard pull before we get home. Come along, Beckenried, we must have you at the helm."

"I hope, Arnold," continued the old man earnestly, as they walked towards the boat, "it is well with you at home. Don't the wife and you pull well together? She is young, you know, and has been indulgently brought up. I am afraid you have quarrelled, or you would not be leaving your home in this way."

"Do not ask me any questions. I cannot tell you—at least not now," answered Arnold impatiently. "Let us go to the boat."

"You must not be angry at my asking," returned the old man, with much feeling. "We are old friends, and I wish you well, Beckenried; but it is ill to go on the lake of Uri with bitterness in the heart, for then the spirits that haunt its waters are angered, and raise high winds and fierce storms. Only those who have the heart pure and

the conscience clear should venture where danger and death may befall them."

These words startled and almost terrified Arnold. They seemed to him ominous of evil; and during the voyage that followed, and for many a day thereafter, they rang in his ears like a knell of fate.

It was a relief that an inquiry, interposed at this moment by one of the boatmen, rendered it unnecessary for him to take any notice of Siegfried's remarks.

Once in motion, gliding smoothly and freely over the dark-blue wavelets of the lake as rapidly as three pairs of oars could propel them, Arnold, who had taken the helm, shook off somewhat of his oppression. It was pleasant to see Rudolf's delight; the child shouted, and clapped his hands with glee, and, thought the fond father, made the scene, fair as it was, appear still fairer. As for Siegfried, he had recovered all his wonted gaiety, and Arnold said to himself that he had never seen his old master in better spirits. Men who are sound in health, and live all day long in the open air, do not often indulge in melancholy

forebodings; their "bosom's lord" generally "sits lightly on his throne."

All this time there had not been enough wind to ruffle Rudolf's curls. It seemed as if the prediction of old Andreas were going to be falsified, and that they would reach Brunnen without being overtaken by the dreaded *föhn*, when, as they neared the Axenberg, Arnold felt as it were a hot breath wafted across his face.

It was the bode of the coming tempest, and, setting his teeth hard, and grasping the tiller with a firmer hand, he prepared for the worst.

"Ah," exclaimed Siegfried, dropping his oars with startling suddenness, "do you see that black line, Beckenried, right away there over against Bauen?"

"Yes; it is the *föhn*. I had felt it before you spoke. But it is passing towards Bauen; we may perhaps escape it."

"Keep up your hearts, my lads," said Siegfried to the two boatmen. "Bend well to your oars, and, please God, we shall all sleep in our

beds this night at Brunnen. Once let us double Axen Point and we shall be all right."

The promontory formed by the Axen, where it advances into the lake, is greatly exposed to the action of the wind and the water at its base was much agitated. Thanks, however, to the skill of the pilot, they doubled it without difficulty, and north of the point the lake on its eastern side was as waveless as a fairy's well. But the opposite side was marked with a line of foam, and angry billows were breaking on the rock-bound shore.

"What do you say, Beckenried?" said Siegfried, as he carefully scanned mountain, sky, and lake. "We shall not make Brunnen without difficulty—danger, perhaps; but it would be soft to go back to Flüelen. I should never hear the last of it from that old Andreas and the others. There is nothing I hate more than to have people say to me: 'It is just as I told you.' What do you think, Arnold?"

Arnold did not answer. All his thoughts were concentrated on the weather and the boat; moreover, desperate though he was, he had no desire to share with Siegfried the responsibility

of continuing a voyage so evidently full of peril.

"Come, what do you think, Beckenried?" repeated the old man impatiently.

"Never mind what I think. What will you do—go on or go back?" was all the answer Arnold gave him.

On this Siegfried seemed more undecided than ever. For a few moments he did not speak; then, with an air that savoured more of hasty impulse than deliberate resolve, he gave an order that proved the death-warrant of two out of the five souls on board the *Fay*.

"Go on, then, in heaven's name. The blessed Virgin will help us. It will not be the first *föhn* I have faced."

"Good," said Arnold. "And now hoist the sail. There is no time to lose. Our best chance is to reach Brunnen before we get the full force of the blast."

"*Donner-wetter!* you are truly a brave pilot, Beckenried!" exclaimed Siegfried admiringly. "None but you would dare to make sail with the wind freshening like that. Hear you not the *föhn* howling in the mountains? It will lead

us a dance soon, and a wild one too—wilder than merry, I am afraid."

"That is exactly why we must make all the speed we may, so as to reach Brunnen as soon as possible. Hoist the sail, I say."

"It shall be done, Beckenried. Here, Traugott; here, Heinrich, step the mast. Steady, now, and with a will. That's right. Now up with the sail. Not too high; thunder and lightning, men, what are you thinking about? Do you want to have the *Fay* blown out of the water? Lower it at least a foot. Good. Now take your oars again, and I'll stand by the sail. Keep your weather-eye open, Herr Pilot; our lives are in your keeping."

The wind rose higher and higher; it thundered in the hollows of the mountains, and sweeping up the lake with frightful violence pushed before it a huge wave that seemed to threaten the *Fay* with utter and immediate destruction. But Arnold guided the boat with so much skill, and held the tiller with so firm a hand, that nobody seemed afraid; the two boatmen were cool and alert, Siegfried smoked his pipe as complacently as if he were sitting in the parlour of The Three

Switzers at Sisikon, and Rudolf clapped his hands and shouted for joy in the strange wild scene around him.

The lake was now covered with white foam, which, blown upward by the wind, assumed fantastic forms of more than earthly beauty, coloured with all the brilliant tints of the rainbow. Far above the strife of the elements the sun shone brightly in a sky of azure; and while the imprisoned waters beat angrily against the rock-bound shore, and the trees on the mountain-tops were swayed to and fro by the raging tempest, the heavens, their splendour undimmed by a single cloud, remained calm and serene.

CHAPTER IV.

THE BATTLE AND THE VICTIMS.

THE *Fay* had passed Tell's chapel. Every moment brought them nearer to their destination; the danger seemed almost passed; and though no one had shown any sign of fear, nor probably experienced any, all felt relieved as they approached Brunnen, and Arnold, in the assurance that his dear little boy would soon be in a place of safety, breathed a silent yet heartfelt prayer of gratitude to heaven.

"Bravo, Beckenried!" shouted Siegfried. "You have done well—borne yourself like a man with a marrow in his backbone. I could not have done better myself, not even were I thirty years younger."

But Arnold is too intent on his work, the peril is still too great, to permit him to relax

his vigilance or notice the old man's words of praise, grateful as in other circumstances they had doubtless been to him.

On flies the *Fay* before the gathering *föhn*, now burying her stem under a cloud of spray, now rising on the crest of a foam-tipped wave, sometimes shipping a sea, but always kept well before the wind by the skilful hand of the bold helmsman. Siegfried is watching the sail; Traugott and Heinrich are baling out the water which washes every minute over the bows.

They near Grütli; Brunnen is almost in sight.

"Hurrah, my men!" shouts Siegfried. "Half an hour more and we shall be at anchor. We will celebrate our victory over the *föhn* by a supper at The Boatman's Rest. Holy Virgin protect us! what is that?" and the old man, with blanched face, pointed his trembling hand towards the south, where the atmosphere had suddenly thickened.

At the same time Arnold, whose gaze was directed northward, became conscious of an abrupt change in the temperature. A light yet

cold wind struck him full in the face. The two boatmen, who had heard Siegfried's exclamation, and knew too well what it meant, seemed terrified beyond expression.

"Do you feel the coolness in the air?" said the old man. "It is the forerunner of the *bise*."

"Yes," answered Arnold gloomily, looking wistfully at Rudolf; "it is the *bise*. Yet, if it comes not lower and the *föhn* holds, there is still hope for us; but if the north wind descends on the lake, then may God help us, for man cannot."

"Amen!" said the old man solemnly. "Forward, in heaven's name, forward! Here, Traugott, Heinrich, ship your oars and row for bare life. Unless we can reach Brunnen before the winds join in battle we are lost men."

Arnold, still holding the tiller with his right hand, leaned forward and loosened the lashings by which a short time before he had bound Rudolf to his seat. Then he looked round on the lake and the mountains as parts of a world he might never see again. Night was setting in. The huge mass of the Seelisberg cast its dark shadow athwart the seething water; the

rocks on either side of them loomed large and threatening in the deepening twilight, and the last rays of the departing sun were dyeing the hoary head of the Frohnalp a bloody red.

Brunnen is now in sight.

"Courage, men, courage!" exclaimed Siegfried cheerily; "we are almost at home. Forward! in the name of heaven, forward! and all may yet be well."

But that which they so much feared had already come to pass. The two winds were in contact. The *föhn* was pushing the *bise* before it, and the latter, compressed and thrust downward, raged on the surface of the lake and dashed against the sides of the mountains with the force of an earthquake. Rocks were rent asunder and hurled into the lake; trees fell like corn before the sickle; and every now and again, as some mighty monarch of the forest was laid low, a sound as of distant thunder was heard above the uproar of the storm.

The sail, having become now a danger rather than a means of safety, was promptly lowered, the mast unstepped, and all the men, Arnold included, took to their oars.

"The time is coming," said the old man, "when every one of us must fight for his own life, as best he may. Let every man think beforehand how he will act should the worst befall. But the nearer we can get to Brunnen the better will be our chances—there is no possibility of landing anywhere else—so let us struggle on, in God's name, and in full trust in His power to help us in this our sore strait. And we can pray. Let every man say a prayer for himself; for prayer is a sheet-anchor that never fails. It is our surest help in peril, our only hope in the hour of death. Is it not so, Beckenried?"

Arnold bowed his head; he was too full to speak; for Rudolf, wild with terror, and drenched to the skin by the wind-tossed spray, was clinging convulsively to his father's knees.

"Take me home!" screamed the child, "take me home to my mother—why cannot we go home to mother? Please, dear vaterchen, do take me home."

"I will take you home, Rudy," answered Arnold desperately; "we shall soon be at Brunnen,

and to-morrow morning we will go back to mother."

But as he uttered these words of hope the warning of old Siegfried—"It's ill to sail on the lake of Uri with bitterness in the heart"—rang in his ears like a portent.

The four men bend to their oars with the desperate energy which the fear of death alone can call forth. For awhile they make visible and even rapid progress. They can now distinguish the white houses of Brunnen, and a hearty cheer from Siegfried tells that hope is once more in the ascendant.

"Never say die, lads!" he shouts. "I tell you we shall all sup together this night in Brunnen."

But as if to give the lie to this confident prediction, the *Fay* at the same instant seems to be stricken with sudden paralysis—she sticks fast in the water and makes no way whatever.

"Pull, men, pull!" cried Arnold, "pull for your lives!" himself at the same time bending to the stroke-oar, which he is working, with such force that it almost snaps in twain.

But all was in vain. The *bise* was raging

with such terrific violence that their uttermost efforts availed not to move the *Fay* one foot in advance. All they could do was to keep her stationary, and prevent her broaching-to and being swamped.

And then another peril arose. Hundreds of trees, broken and thrown down from the mountains in the Battle of the Winds, were dashing madly about, threatening every moment to hurl themselves against the boat and shiver it to atoms. Arnold seized a boat-hook, and by dint of his great strength, aided by a marvellous quickness of eye, succeeded for a time in warding off this new danger.

"They can see us from Brunnen now," said Siegfried; "they will surely not let us perish without making an effort to save us."

"They do—they do see us!" exclaimed Traugott joyfully. "Look there, they are putting off in that big boat. A few minutes and they will be here——"

"And not a minute too soon," interrupted Siegfried, who was watching the movement of the trees around them with intense anxiety.

"Look out, Arnold, look out!" he shouts

excitedly, as a huge pine-trunk makes a wild rush towards the starboard side of the boat. "Keep her off, men; do the impossible, Beckenried, or we are lost."

When the tree came within reach Arnold launched his boat-hook, and made a superhuman effort to thrust it aside. He very nearly succeeded, but the tree, as it glided past, struck the *Fay's* stern and broke the rudder. The next moment the boat was bottom upwards and her crew struggling in the water. Arnold, who had never lost sight of Rudolf, dived after him as he went down, and, rising with the child, held fast in one of his arms, struck out for the boat. After a desperate struggle, in which he tore off all the finger-nails of his right hand, he succeeded in getting astride of the keel. Then, pressing Rudolf's unconscious form to his bosom, he found by the beating of his heart that the boy still lived. Looking around for his comrades, he saw Traugott and Heinrich clinging to the floating trunk of the very pine-tree which had caused their disaster; while Siegfried was a few fathoms away, swimming towards the *Fay*. The boat from Brunnen had already gained half the dis-

tance between themselves and the shore. With rescue so near at hand it could hardly be doubted that all would yet be well.

"Courage, Siegfried!" cried Arnold cheerfully to the old man. "Come here alongside, and I'll give you a leg up. If we can only hold on for five or ten minutes—and I think we can—those brave fellows from Brunnen will be here with their boat; so keep up your spirits, old friend."

"Hark! what is that?" exclaimed Siegfried, in a startled voice, as, seating himself behind Arnold, he pointed towards the Seelisberg.

Above the howling of the wind and the tumult of the waters could be faintly heard the sweet sound of a church bell, calling the faithful to prayer.

"Ave Maria!" said the old man solemnly, "it is the passing-bell, the bell of the dead. God wills that one of us this night shall die. His will be done. If the lot should fall on me it will only be just; for by my pride and recklessness have your lives been brought into this deadly peril. I should have turned back, but I was too proud—I was too proud. God forgive me. Ave Maria! Christ have pity!——"

As he spoke he raised his hands towards heaven, and while his hold was thus relaxed a huge billow dashed over the boat and threw him again into the water. Arnold, leaning forward to help his friend, lost his balance, fell headlong into the lake, and, striking in his descent against a passing log, sank beneath the flood.

CHAPTER V.

AT THE FOOT OF THE CROSS.

AN hour later a man was lying on a couch in one of the rooms of The William Tell at Brunnen. At the head of the couch sat a doctor, watch in hand, and with a finger on the man's pulse; at his foot stood the village priest, saying a Latin prayer. Several fishermen, their clothes dripping wet, were curiously looking on.

"He will pull through," said the doctor emphatically; "his pulse becomes stronger every minute. See, he moves, he opens his eyes."

"Heaven and the holy Virgin be praised!" exclaimed the priest, fervently clasping his hands.

"What is it? where am I?" muttered Arnold Beckenried feebly, as he gazed around with lack-lustre eyes.

Then, in trying to push away the damp hair

from his brow, he caught sight of his wounded fingers, and remembered all that had happened.

"Where is my boy—my little Rudolf?" he demanded excitedly, raising himself on his elbow, and looking intently into every corner of the room.

All looked at him pityingly, but none answered.

"Where is my child?" he asked again, leaping from the couch and seizing the man nearest to him by the shoulders. "I want him, I tell you; I cannot live without him. But" (lowering his voice) "you perhaps don't know Rudolf; you never saw him. He is a little fellow, only six years old; it was his birthday last month; but he is well grown. His cheeks are rosy, his eyes dark, his hair is long and curly, and he has a merry smile, and is good and loving withal—the dearest, bonniest boy in all the land of Uri. What have you done with him? Maybe he is not well with falling in the water? You have put him to bed. Take me to him; let me see him. Quick, I beg of you, take me to him."

"It is time to end this," said one of the fishermen who had been in the Brunnen boat, wiping away a tear from his weather-beaten face. "Look

here, Beckenried, it may seem a cruel thing to say, yet the truth must be told. In this world you will never see your boy again. God has been good to him: he lies at the bottom of the lake with old Siegfried of Sisikon. We saved you and the two boatmen, but for the others we were too late."

"No, no, no! I do not believe it. He is on the boat; he is afloat on some drifting log. I will go and look for him; I will dive——; I will—— Let me go, I say; nothing shall hinder me." And dashing aside the arms that would have restrained him, the desperate man rushed out of the house, and running down to the water's-edge, began to unchain a boat. The fishermen followed, pushed him away by main force, and dragged him back to the inn.

"Arnold Beckenried," said the priest severely, "do you know that you are rebelling against heaven? Would you, because you have lost your child, throw away your life? Do you think, if it had not been good for you, for your wife, and for the little one whom He has taken to Himself, God would have visited you with this affliction?"

"You are right, father, you are right. I am wicked and sinful and rebellious; it is ill to sail on the lake of Uri with bitterness in the heart. Poor Helena! Lend me a coat, some of you, and I will hie me home."

"Go home to-night!" exclaimed one of the fishermen. "Know you what like of a night this is? On Uri lake it is blowing a hurricane, and not a boatman in Brunnen will take you to Flüelen either for love nor money."

"I do not mean by the lake. I will go on foot over the Axen."

"Impossible!" said the innkeeper, "it would be nothing less than madness. Over the Axen on a night like this! Why, there is not a guide in the countryside who would go with you, offer him what you might."

"I want nobody to go with me. Do you take me for a cowardly townsman or an idle tourist?" exclaimed Arnold indignantly. "Know that I am mountain born, and could find my way over the Axen blindfold. Will somebody, for pity's sake, lend me a coat?"

"Give him a coat," said the priest, "and let him go. It is the best thing that he can do. The

very effort will divert his thoughts and help him to support his sorrow."

The coat was speedily found.

"Go, Beckenried," continued the priest, "and may Heaven and the holy Virgin protect thee!"

Arnold thanked the priest for his kindness, and after expressing his gratitude to the brave fellows who had ventured their lives to save his, and to the keeper of the inn for his hospitality, he set out on his long journey.

The storm still raged fiercely upon the lake; but as he ascended the mountain its force seemed gradually to abate, and the clouds which from time to time drifted slowly between earth and moon showed that another wind-current was beginning to prevail in the upper air, and that a change of weather was at hand. The path at that hour was utterly deserted, and, save for the sound of Arnold's footsteps and the echo of falling pebbles, which, dislodged by his tread, bounded from rock to rock until they dropped with sullen plunge into the waters of the lake, the stillness of the night was unbroken. The wild animals, terrified by the battle of the winds and the fury of the tempest, were hidden in their

lairs; the birds had taken refuge in the depths of the forest, and the goatherd had long since led his flocks to the fold. Arnold was alone on the Axenberg, the only human being, probably, on the road between Brunnen and Flüelen. He breasted the height without turning to the right or the left, without let or pause, with legs firmly planted at every step, bent head, and tightly clasped hands; his body full of vigour, his mind torn and tossed by bitter thoughts and agonising memories. But for him, his pride, his folly, his obstinacy, Rudolf might still have been alive. True, Helena had not been kind; she was unjust, proud, and self-willed; but was he so much better than she that he had a right to punish her by taking away her child and making him the victim of his parents' frowardness? How should he break to Helena the terrible news of which he was the bearer, how tell her that her boy slept his last sleep in the Urner see, and that in the flesh she would never see him more?

Agitated by thoughts like these he pursued his way.

Shortly after passing the summit of the mountain, he saw to the left of the path a small

meadow which, as he knew, overhung the lake, and, seized with a sudden impulse to look once more on the scene of the tragedy, he entered the enclosure, and from the edge of the precipice looked into the depths below. Long and passionately he gazed into the dark seething water, in which, as it seemed to him, all the brightness of his life lay buried. He pictured his lost boy as he appeared only a few hours before—his childish beauty, his winning ways, his engaging prattle, his affection for Helena and himself—and then he pictured him lying stark and stiff at the bottom of the lake, never more to see the light of the sun, or to be clasped to the hearts of those that loved him so well, and who would have died to shield him from harm.

As Arnold turned away from the precipice he groaned aloud, and flung a bitter curse at the fierce winds and treacherous waters that had wrought him and his such terrible misery. Just then a cloud was blown away from the face of the moon, and he saw before him a rude wooden cross, planted there by pious hands, to mark the spot where a fatal accident had befallen a poor woodcutter. Arnold, like most of the men of

Unterwalden and Uri, belonged to the old religion, though, like them and all free Switzers, he was little given either to over-credulity or superstition; but at this moment he was in a state of intense mental excitement; emotion was in the ascendant. He looked upon this apparition of the emblem of man's salvation as a sign from heaven, and, throwing himself at the foot of the cross, poured forth his heart in prayer, with a fervour and an abandonment which are possible only when sorrow and affliction have passed with their burning ploughshares over the soul.

CHAPTER VI.

RECONCILIATION.

IT was night in the Châlet Hittenberg, but Helena slept not. She had spent a wretched day. Pride might stifle the still small voice which told her that the misery she endured was of her own making, yet it could neither quench her love for her husband, nor subdue her yearning for her child; and the fear that her separation from them might be lifelong drove her wild with anguish. She accused Arnold of cruelty in taking away the boy, in her despair almost cursing the man whom she still loved, and whom she had vowed before God to honour and obey. Then, as the day went on, another fear overshadowed her soul. The voice of the *föhn* in the mountains, and the swaying of the trees in the forest, told her that danger brooded over the lake of Uri, and that all

who were sailing on its waters were in deadly peril. Arnold and Rudolf had gone with Siegfried of Sisikon to Brunnen; so much she had heard from a neighbour who had seen them at Flüelen. Would they reach their destination in safety? Should she ever see them again? She knew Arnold's courage and Siegfried's obstinacy too well to suppose they would abandon the voyage at the last moment, or turn back after they had once set off. She tried to pray, but could not; her heart was still rebellious and the supplications she would fain have spoken remained unuttered. When night came she went to bed and tried to sleep, but the oblivion she summoned refused to come, and her thoughts were so dismal that, long before daybreak she rose and went down to the common room of the châlet, where she had spent so many happy days with her father, her husband, and her boy. After pacing to and fro for several weary hours, she sat down, and, covering her face with her hands, tried to calm the fever of her mind.

The effort is vain, and as the sun rises above the mountains, flooding the cottage with the golden light of another dawn, Helena lifts her head and

looks towards the window near which her husband had stood the morning before, when he told her of his resolution to break up their home.

As she looks, she bounds to her feet with a cry of terror. Against the window-sill leans a man with a haggard ghastly face, dishevelled hair, tangled beard, and garments dripping wet. In that woebegone creature Helena recognises her husband, but whether in the body or out of the body she knows not, and she stands there with outstretched arms and fearful eyes, as if turned into stone.

The next moment the door turns on its hinges, and Arnold stands before her in the flesh.

"Helena," he said, "I have come back to you. God has punished us for our sins by taking Rudolf to himself; his body lies deep in the Urner see; but his spirit is with the angels in heaven."

"And you are his murderer," she was going to say, but the cruel words were arrested on her lips and remained forever unspoken.

With a quick gasp and a feeble attempt to save himself, Arnold fell heavily on the floor. The excitement, the fatigue, and the fasting of the previous twenty-four hours had been too much

even for his robust frame, and he had fainted. But Helena thought he was dead.

The double stroke was more than she could bear. At last her proud spirit was conquered; and great as had been her past obstinacy and self-will, her present abasement and remorse were still greater.

She knelt, weeping, over Arnold's prostrate body; she raised his head on her lap, and looked lovingly on the face over which so fearful a change had passed since she last beheld it. Then she found that he still lived. She bathed his brow with cold water, she plied him with restoratives, and in a little while he opened his eyes and took her hand in his.

"Forgive me, Arnold," she cried, "oh forgive me. The fault is mine. I drove you away. My pride, my obstinacy—my wicked obstinacy —have done this evil. I have killed my child—I have killed my child."

"No, Helena; you have not killed him, any more than I have. We did not mean to lead him into danger. God has seen fit to take him away, for our good and his; let us take the lesson to heart."

For a long time Helena refused to be comforted, but at length she was brought to see the death of her darling in the same light in which Arnold saw it, and to admit that affliction was sometimes the surest proof of the divine love.

From that time forth the Beckenried household ceased to be divided against itself, and the peace of Arnold's and Helena's lives was never again troubled by warring tempers or domestic broils.

There was no question now of remaining at the châlet. The neighbourhood of Flüelen and the lake had become hateful to them both. The farm in Unterwalden was bought, and they settled in one of the most beautiful parts of Arnold's native canton.

After a while God gave them another Rudolf, to replace, as far as might be, him whom they had lost. But they never forgot their firstborn, nor that his loss had been their gain ; for they knew that where he had found his early death they had found the peace of their lives—in the Battle of the Winds on Uri lake.

THE CHÂTELAIN'S DAUGHTER.

THE

CHÂTELAIN'S DAUGHTER.

EARLY on the morning of the 8th of June, 1476, being fourteen days before the battle of Morat, a mounted peasant galloped in hot haste into the court of Chillon Castle. Hurriedly dismounting, the horseman demanded instant speech of the Châtelain de Chatelard, commandant of the fortress, and governor of Vevey and Tour de Peilz.

"Here I am, Montchal; what are your tidings?" said the commandant, coming forward; for albeit the sun was only just risen, he had already been afoot an hour or more, visited his men-at-arms who were keeping watch and ward in the pass, and inspected the garrison of the castle.

"The soldiers of Berne are crossing the

Jaman," answered the scout, for such he was. "In little more than an hour they will be down in the valley. Hark to the tocsin! and see, the beacons are ablaze on the summit of the Naye and the slopes of the Moine."

The Châtelain, looking in the direction indicated by the scout, saw two thin columns of smoke curling slowly upward in the clear morning air, and listening intently he could hear the faint echo of alarm-bells, as the sound was borne from tower to tower and from valley to valley.

Then the Baron de Gingins, Châtelain of Chatelard, knew that the lords of Berne were about to wreak the vengeance they had so fiercely threatened. A short time previously the towns of Vevey and Tour de Peilz had allowed free passage to a body of Italian soldiers, on their way to the camp of Charles the Bold of Burgundy, then at war with the confederate cantons. Taking offence at this proceeding, which they regarded as a breach of neutrality, the government of Berne gave orders to Zurkinden, Vogt of High Simmenthal, to lay siege to Tour de Peilz, and give it and Vevey over to pillage, and put the inhabitants and the garrison to the

sword—a command all the more easy of execution, as the country about Lake Leman was just then almost denuded of Savoyard troops.

Although Pierre de Gingins was entrusted with the defence of two strong places and an open town, and had to take thought, moreover, for his own castle of Chatelard, he disposed only of a few score men-at-arms and two or three hundred archers of Lavaux. His father, the Sire de Belmont, with a force equally slender, held the Chablais of Vaud; while the defence of Upper Chablais had been confided to the Sire de Miolans, whose troops were composed chiefly of vassals of the Count of Geneva, at that time lord of the country and deputy of the Duke of Savoy. But De Miolans, tempted by the promises, and corrupted by the gold, of the crafty king of France, deserted his post, and leaving his troops to their fate, withdrew into Dauphiny. The Châtelain of Chatelard was thus left to bear unaided the brunt of the Bernese onslaught, and make head against it as he best might.

After hearing the scout's report, asking him two or three pointed questions, and giving a few minutes to reflection, De Gingins ordered the

men who were with him, save the handful necessary for the defence of Chillon, to fall back on Tour de Peilz; and then, mounting a swift horse, he himself hastened thither at full speed, to prepare the garrison for the attack, which he knew would be a formidable one, and might tax all their resources and their utmost energy successfully to oppose.

Tour de Peilz at the time in question was a small town, walled and moated, and further defended by a citadel, whose rounded and ivy-mantled keep still exists, and lends an additional attraction to one of the most charming landscapes on the shores of Lake Leman. It was founded in 1234, by Peter of Savoy, known to his contemporaries as the "little Charlemagne," the builder of Chillon. Under Peter's successor the population of the place, owing to the advantages of its site and the favour of the House of Savoy, rapidly increased in importance and extent, and at the opening of our story Tour de Peilz was at the height of its fortunes.

When the Châtelain reached the Chillon gate he found the drawbridge that spanned the moat already lowered and the guard standing to their

arms; for long before his arrival they had recognised his black steed and glittering armour; and by the speed at which he rode they knew that their lord's business was one that brooked not delay.

"To arms!" cried De Gingins as he galloped over the bridge. "To arms; every man to his post; load the culverins; man the ramparts; hoist the banner of Savoy on the outward wall. Before noon the Swiss will be upon us, before nightfall the town will be encompassed on every side!"

Then, entering the castle, he called round him his principal officers, gave his orders in detail, and, telling them how little of mercy they had to hope for from a foe whose object was rather vengeance than conquest, exhorted them, as their only means of safety, and by their duty to their prince, to offer a vigorous resistance, cheering them with promise of a victory—albeit in his heart he hardly believed victory possible.

"And now," he continued, after he had dismissed the officers to their stations, "let somebody bring hither Siegfried, my major-domo."

Meanwhile the Châtelain, still mounted on his black charger, anxiously watched the progress

of the preparations he had ordered. Pierre de Gingins was a man of commanding presence—tall, spare, and middle-aged; pale, dark-browed, and stern of feature. A smile played about his lips, an attempt at cheerfulness that the sadness of his fine black eyes sorely belied. His general expression was that of a man oppressed with care and saddened by a foreboding of coming ill.

"I am here, my lord," said a thick guttural voice at his elbow.

The Baron looked round and, notwithstanding his preoccupation, the sight he saw made him almost laugh. The speaker was Siegfried, his major-domo, a great mountain of a fellow, fat as two Falstaffs rolled into one, and with a face that might have served a painter as a model for the face of a Silenus. He was swaying to and fro, and trying to balance himself first on one leg and then on another—an attempt in which he signally and ludicrously failed.

"Oh, you are trying if you are sober, are you?" said his master. "You may save yourself the trouble, for I give you my word of honour that you are about as drunk as I have ever seen you. What have you been doing?"

"Bottling the Vin de Montreux, my lord; the very finest wine I ever tasted. In two years' time, my lord, it will be fit for the duke—fit for the kaiser—yea, fit for the gods to drink. Let me fetch a goblet for your lordship to taste."

"Two years!" exclaimed the Châtelain scornfully. "Where shall we all be in two years, think you—in two days even? Hear you not the ringing of the tocsin, and the call to arms? Your countrymen, under Vogt Zurkinden, are marching against us, and if they attack the town, as they threaten, and you fall into their hands, they will hang you like a dog, and not leave a single drop of your wine undrunk. So look to yourself, Siegfried. Where is the Lady Bertha?"

"In the chapel, my lord," answered the majordomo, in a trembling voice, for the news he had just heard sorely troubled him.

"Here, varlet," said the Châtelain to a groom, who stood by, "hold my horse," and, without giving further heed to Siegfried, he entered the castle.

"Ten thousand devils!" muttered the majordomo, as with blanched face and unsteady gait he followed his master. "The Vogt of Simmenthal

coming! What his lordship says is true. If he takes the town—and take it he will—and finds me, Berner born, among these cursed Savoyards, the least I can hope for will be a short shrift and a long rope. I will get me into the cellar, and hide me behind that butt of Burgundy in the far corner. They will want sharp eyes that find me. And I will hide there till the hurly-burly is done, and Zurkinden has gone back over the Jaman."

As the iron heel of the Châtelain rang on the flagged floor of the little octagon chapel in the east turret, Bertha rose from her *prie-dieu* and turned to greet him. Tall, above the usual height of her sex, and of noble presence, the lady of Chatelard, albeit she had only seen twenty summers, wore a look little less grave than that of her gallant father. Her eyes, like his, were dark, her cheeks as delicately coloured as an Alpine rose, and her long black hair covered her shoulders like a veil.

"What has happened, my father?" she said, as the Baron touched her fair cheeks with his lips; for she knew that for no light cause would the Châtelain enter the chapel in full armour. She lived, moreover, in a troubled time; she had heard of the threat of the lords of

Berne, and, though of high courage, past experience had made her constantly apprehensive of evil.

"Zurkinden and the Swiss are within an hour's march of the town, my Bertha. Ere this they have probably crossed the Naye. They have orders to storm Tour de Peilz, and punish us for having obeyed the command of our prince; which means that, if the place falls into their hands, they will put the garrison to the sword and pillage the town. But have no fear, we shall send these gentlemen back to Berne faster than they came. We will give them such a reception that those of them who survive will never, as long as they live, forget the Tour and its châtelain. Meanwhile, my dear child, I want you to stay with your maidens in the east turret, where you will be free from danger. When the fight waxes warm come here to the chapel, and pray God and his holy saints to give us the victory. Heaven bless you and guard you, my Bertha. Since your mother and brother perished in that terrible storm on the lake you have become doubly dear to me. You only are left me to love."

"And there is none but you for me to love,

my father," exclaimed Bertha, throwing her arms passionately round her father's neck. "Let me go with you, let me ride by your side to the ramparts. I cannot, cannot remain here, and know that you are in deadly peril."

"That may not be, my Bertha," said the Châtelain, folding her in his arms, and imprinting a loving kiss on the girl's upturned brow. "It is a woman's place to watch and pray, a man's to pray and fight. But fear not, I will go into no unnecessary danger, and Hubert shall bring you at least every hour news of the strife."

And then the Châtelain, after giving his daughter a last embrace, and conducting her to the altar, where she sank on her knees before the image of Christ, left the chapel.

As he entered the castle yard he was met by one of his officers, who informed him that the look-out on the north tower reported that the banners of Berne were in sight.

"So soon!" said the Châtelain. "It is Zurkinden's advance-guard; the main body cannot be here for an hour or two more. How speed our preparations?"

"Fairly, my lord baron. The archers of

Lavaux have arrived, and are at their posts; the cannoniers are getting their pieces into position; the matchlock men are casting bullets; water is running fast into the moat. I daresay we shall be ready as soon as the Swiss are. Do you think they will hazard an attack to-night?"

"They will be very eager, I daresay, and they are fully aware of their strength and our weakness; but an attack before to-morrow would be the merest foolhardiness; and Zurkinden is no fool. I wish he were. They have had a long march; they want rest; they must invest the town and place their engines. All this will take time. No, they cannot deliver an assault before to-morrow's sunset, at the soonest. Nevertheless, my brave Berthaud, it behoves us to complete our preparations with all possible speed. Let us to the western rampart, for there, I fear, is our weakest point."

Long after her father had left the chapel, Bertha remained prostrate before the altar, only rising from her knees when the clang of arms, the tramping of horses, the hoarse shouts of the Swiss, and the answering cheers

of the garrison, told her that the foe was before the walls.

Then she withdrew to her chamber in the east turret and sat there alone, buried in deep thought, until the sun, after crowning the snowy heads of the Chablaisian alps with crimson glory, disappeared behind a mass of purple cloud that hung over the summit of Mount Jorat. The fall of night seemed to rouse her from her reverie. She rang a silver bell which stood on the table at her side. One of her maidens answered the summons.

"What would you, my lady?" asked the maiden.

"Send hither Hubert, my page, and bring me a lamp."

In a few minutes Hubert, a handsome and stalwart youth, only a year or two younger than Bertha herself, appeared.

"What are your tidings, Hubert?" she asked; "when say they the attack will begin?"

"It is the opinion of Monsieur Berthaud, Lady Bertha, as I just heard him say to my lord, your father, that the Swiss will deliver their first assault to-morrow morning at sunrise. They

have brought fascines, and planks, and ladders, and are beyond all doubt making ready to bridge over the moat, and take us by escalade; but they seem to have no artillery, and with our bombards and culverins—though they are of small calibre and our garrison is so weak—Monsieur Berthaud is confident that we shall beat them off with ease."

"Thank you, my good Hubert. You are a bearer of brave tidings. I shall perhaps be able now to take a few hours' sleep. But early in the morning bring me tidings of the fight."

"Before sunrise I will be on the ramparts, and every hour you shall know how speeds the strife."

"Every half-hour, my good Hubert, every half-hour."

"Be it so, Lady Bertha; your word is law —my law."

Hardly had the first rays of the sun on the following morning gilded the snow-crested summits of the Alps, when the page again presented himself in the east turret.

The Swiss were developing their plan of attack, he said. They had been at work during

the night and bridged the moat in three places; the first at the north-east angle of the town, the second opposite the principal gate, the third at the south-east angle: Thus three assaults might be delivered at once by three different storming-parties, any one of which would be superior in numbers to the whole of the garrison. "If they had artillery," added Hubert, "I am afraid it would go hard with us. Hark! the combat has begun."

And then Bertha heard, not for the first time, the terrible din of war. Bombards boomed from the ramparts, arrows hurtled through the air, men shouted and cursed and shouted again, horses neighed and stamped, the ring of steel against steel showed that some of the Swiss had already mounted the wall, and as they were hurled back into the moat their death screams were heard even in the chamber of the Châtelain's daughter.

"Oh Hubert, this is unbearable," exclaimed Bertha, with flashing eyes. "I cannot stay here like a helpless child while my father is in danger of his life. I will go to him and fight by his side. Fetch me hither a suit of armour."

"Oh Lady Bertha, it cannot be. Do not think of such a thing, I pray you. What would my lord, your father, say?"

"I will answer to my father, Hubert. Do as I bid you. Are you not my page, sworn to obey my least command? How dare you to hesitate? Go, I say."

It was impossible to gainsay an order so peremptorily given. Hubert went to the armoury and selected a suit of armour which he thought might not be too heavy for the delicate, yet far from feeble, limbs of his fair mistress.

With the help of her maidens and her page Lady Bertha was arrayed in cuirass, greaves, helmet, and gauntlets of iron; and after being girt with a slender sword of Toledo steel, she descended, followed by her page, who was also fully armed, to the outer court of the castle. Then her horse, a black Spanish jennet, was fetched, and, still accompanied by her faithful attendant, she hastened to the principal gate of the town, whither she arrived at the very moment that the brave archers of Lavaux had repulsed an attack led by Zurkinden in person.

"Glorious!" exclaimed Bertha, waving her

sword, as she joined her father; "down with the bear of Berne! See how they run! Will you not let the men-at-arms pursue them, father?"

"You here, Bertha!" said the Châtelain in a surprised and almost angry voice. "Did I not bid you remain with your maidens in the east turret?"

"I could not bear to be separated from you, father. How was it possible for me, when I heard the sounds of war, and knew that you were fighting for honour and life, to fold my hands and tell my beads, and hide in my chamber? You forget whose blood runs in my veins, my lord baron."

"Be it so, Bertha," answered the Châtelain, who, stern soldier as he was, had never in all his life had the courage to chide his daughter; "I cannot say nay to so bold a spirit. I think, too, the danger is almost past. We have repulsed all their attacks as yet. The courage of our men is high, and Zurkinden's losses are so heavy that, seeing he has no artillery, he will hardly venture to attempt another assault."

But even as the commandant spoke the ranks of the Swiss—who by this time had recovered

from their confusion—opened, and disclosed to view two large bombards, which had been transported with immense difficulty over the mountains from Berne.

Then Pierre de Gingins knew that he was fighting for a lost cause—that Tour de Peilz was doomed, for its old gates and ramparts were in no condition to resist modern engines of war. The bombards were planted opposite the Chillon gate. Their fire, directed against the towers by which it was defended, soon rendered them untenable, and the valorous archers of Lavaux, whose arrows could not reach the artillerists, had to be withdrawn. The gate and the flanking walls did not long withstand the besiegers' fire, and while Zurkinden made at this point his chief attack a strong force was told off to escalade the eastern rampart, whose principal defenders had perforce been called away to make head against the main attack. The device succeeded, and while the Châtelain was warmly engaged with the main body of the enemy in his front, who, after battering down the gates with their guns were advancing to the attack in overwhelming numbers, one of his officers came in hot haste to tell him

that a second storming-party were pouring over the eastern wall, and that he would soon be taken between two fires.

Bertha and Hubert were still by the Châtelain's side. They had done good service as aides-de-camp; more than once, indeed, they had plunged into the thickest of the fight, and the crimson stains on the page's sword showed that he had not used it in vain. Bertha bore herself right nobly. She encouraged the men-at-arms by voice and gesture. Fired by her example they fought like heroes. Every time the Swiss made a rush at the gate they were driven back with great loss, and had it not been for the success of the second attack the defenders, in spite of Zurkinden's artillery, might perhaps have held their own, or, at least, have kept the foe at bay until nightfall, and so have given the town's people and the garrison time to escape by the lake. As it was, when the Châtelain heard that the foe had gained the eastern rampart he ordered his men to fall back towards the citadel.

"All that we can do now," he said to those about him, "is to sell our lives as dearly as possible. Better to die fighting than to be hanged

in cold blood by those butchers of Berne, for a quick stab or a long rope is all the mercy we may expect from them. Bertha," he continued, turning to his daughter, "promise me that you will not fall into the hands of the brutal Swiss——"

"Alive? I promise, my father. Have no fear, Bertha of Chatelard will show herself worthy of her father and the race from which she springs."

"That is spoken like my daughter, and a true Chatelard. But you are young to die, my child. May it please God and the holy Virgin to spare—— Ah!——"

Pierre de Gingins threw up his arms and bounding convulsively in his saddle fell forward on the neck of his horse, a dead man. A bolt from a crossbow had pierced his brain.

The Savoyard men-at-arms, discouraged by the death of their leader, now rapidly gave way. For a few minutes Bertha remained by the side of her dead father. She even refused to leave him, and would have been captured by the Swiss, who were by this time advancing from two sides, had not the page seized her horse's bridle and forcibly led her away.

"The Berners have taken the town; they have killed your noble father," he exclaimed; "what will it profit to let them kill you also; or, still worse, to take you alive?"

Bertha, too much overcome by grief to have any will of her own, yielded to her page's advice, and rallying a few of the archers of Lavaux, who had formed the Châtelain's escort during the day, Hubert succeeded in gaining the citadel. But the Swiss were close behind them, and as the Savoyards were too few to offer a successful resistance they could only hope for a short respite.

After barring the ponderous door, the page led the way to the chapel in the east turret.

"What are you about to do, Hubert?" asked Bertha, rousing herself for a moment from her stupor of grief.

"Escape!"

"But it is not possible. Listen; the Swiss are even now breaking in the door."

"Never fear, Lady Bertha. In a few minutes we shall be beyond their reach. See here," and as the page spoke he produced a coil of rope, with which he had provided himself on entering the castle.

Then, going to a window overlooking the lake, he ordered two of the soldiers to break it in with their halberds. This done, he lowered Bertha by means of the rope to the water's-edge. In a few minutes himself and the archers were by her side. A large boat was moored hard by, into which they all entered, and Hubert, directing the men to take each an oar, placed himself at the helm, and they pushed off into the lake.

"We are safe now," exclaimed the page. "Did I not say we should balk them?"

"But have we balked them?" said one of the archers. "See! they are running down to the water—they have got a boat! They are going to follow us!"

"Let them follow us," answered the page. "They cannot overtake us. If they do we shall be quite a match for them; and before they can find and man another boat we shall be halfway across the lake."

It was soon evident that, as Hubert said, the Swiss had no chance of overtaking the fugitives. Their boat was heavier, and their men were less expert with the oars than the archers of Lavaux, who were as much at home on water as on land.

"Go a little slower," ordered the page; "let them believe they can overtake us. We will try to avenge on these ruffians the death of our noble Châtelain."

This was done. When the pursuers saw that they were gaining on the fugitives they redoubled their exertions, for they knew that Bertha of Chatelard was in the boat, and they had been strictly charged by Zurkinden to bring her back, dead or alive. Meanwhile Hubert, after handing the tiller to Bertha, had armed himself with a crossbow, and directed all the archers save two to be ready on a given signal to follow his example. Then, so soon as he judged the Berners to be well within bowshot, he gave the word, and a shower of bolts was let fly among them, killing two outright and wounding two others. One-half their boat's-crew were thus *hors de combat*, and there was nothing for the survivors to do but hasten shoreward with all possible speed. Hubert, albeit much disposed, did not deem it prudent to follow them, and the Savoyards continued their voyage unmolested to the Chablais side of the lake.

They alone escaped. All the other survivors

of the garrison were hanged; Siegfried, the major-domo, alone excepted. He was found helplessly drunk behind the butt of Burgundy, where he had hidden himself at the beginning of the fight; and, as no rope could be found strong enough to bear his weight, he was put into a boat, taken into deep water and thrown overboard, not even being allowed the short shrift, which, had hanging been his fate, would probably have been granted him.

All the inhabitants of Vevey and Tour de Peilz, who had not left before these places fell into the hands of the Swiss, were pitilessly put to the sword, and their houses, after being pillaged, burnt to the ground. The keep, whose sturdy walls not even the torch could destroy, was alone left standing. For several years after Zurkinden's fated visit Tour de Peilz and Vevey were left desolate and unpeopled.

Bertha found a refuge in the castle of St. Pal, a possession of the Sieur de Blonay. She mourned bitterly her father's death, and in the following year, shortly after being told that Hubert the page had perished in the disastrous battle of Nancy, while fighting in the ranks of the Bur-

gundian army—she was taken from a world where she had known so many sorrows, to join in the heavenly kingdom those who had gone before.

[The siege and destruction of Vevey and Tour de Peilz, the massacre of their inhabitants, and the death of the Châtelain de Chatelard, are historic facts. According to tradition, eight men of the garrison only escaped. The house of De Gingins is one of the oldest, and was once one of the most powerful, in canton Vaud. It has produced distinguished soldiers, statesmen, and scholars. The De Gingins were seigneurs of Divonne, Montreux, Fernex, Gingins, Genollier, and Belmont, co-seigneurs of Vevey, Châtelains of Chatelard, and barons of La Sarraz. The château of Chatelard is now the property of the Marquis Dubochet; but the ancient and picturesque castle of La Sarraz still belongs to a Baron de Gingins, who is descended in a direct line from Jean de Gingins (father of Pierre, killed at the siege of Tour de Peilz) and Marguerite, baroness of La Sarraz, herself a descendant of the puissant princes of Grandson.]

THE

SPITTLER OF THE GRIMSEL.

THE SPITTLER OF THE GRIMSEL.

IN 1557, the landschaft (district) of Oberhasli, with a view to facilitate travel between the cantons of Berne, Uri, and the Valais, built a Hospice on the Grimsel pass, at a height of 5750 feet above the sea-level, and placed therein a spittler, or steward, who was charged to keep the road clear of snow, and provide meat, drink, and lodging for such travellers as had need thereof, so far as the weather and his receipts might permit. Travellers who had the means were expected to pay their score, but nothing was to be asked from the poor. To meet the expenses thus incurred the spittler was empowered to take up a collection throughout Switzerland; and all god-fearing people, especially those who had occasion to make

alpine journeys in winter, subscribed freely to so pious a work. The spittler was further rewarded by the benedictions of the hundreds of wayfarers whom he succoured; for none ever left the friendly shelter of the Hospice without uttering a fervent *Vergelt de's Gott!*

For some three hundred years these were the duties—with the liability thrown in of being snowed up half the year, crushed by an avalanche* if they stayed in, or eaten by wolves if they went out—of the Grimsel spittlers; their recompense: scant pay, many blessings, and an approving conscience. But the present century wrought a wondrous change in their fortunes, and those of the Hospice. Switzerland came into vogue as the playground of Europe. Every summer a fructifying stream of gold flowed over the pass, the rude alpine caravanserai became a modern hotel, and the Hospice, instead of being a charge on the landschaft, produced a handsome addition to its revenues.

* On March 22nd, 1838, the Hospice was overwhelmed by an avalanche, which broke through the roof and floors, and filled every room but that occupied by the man in charge, who succeeded with great difficulty in working his way through the snow, and, together with his dog, his only companion, reached Meiringen in safety.

The best known and most remarkable of the new spittlers of the Grimsel, men who paid rent, and were hotel-keepers rather than stewards, was Peter Zybach. Peter took the house in 1836, in succession to Herr Leuthold, whose daughter he had married. Zybach was a good specimen of a thrifty energetic Switzer, and under his management the Hospice acquired an almost European celebrity, and himself and his family a wide popularity. Though only the leaseholder he greatly improved the property at his own cost, increased the number of bedrooms to a hundred, enlarged the dining-room, and fitted up the house for the accommodation of well-to-do travellers. The domestic arrangements were left to his wife, his son, and his daughters, while himself looked after the outside concerns—the little farm that formed part of his take, and the mules, horses, carriages, and drivers, which in the summer season were always coming and going. But as he knew the country well, having in his younger days been a bold cragsman and ardent chamois hunter, he was always appealed to when a traveller or "pass-man" wanted information about routes, mountain-paths, the condition of the glaciers, or the prospects of the weather, of which

he was esteemed an almost infallible judge. Peter had a fine family of sons and daughters, who were almost as widely known as himself. His eldest son was the indoor manager. His comely daughters, clad in the picturesque costume of old Berne, acted as waiters; and the eldest of them, besides being conversant with literary German, spoke fluently the English and French tongues.

The visitors'-book was quite a curiosity. It contained a poem by Toepffer, the renowned Genevan poet; clever Greek verses in praise of the Hospice, by a celebrated German professor; queer Latin ones in praise of Zybach's daughters, by rollicking German students; and the autographs of many Englishmen of rank and fashion. Agassiz, Desor, and Hugi had written in the book descriptions of their excursions among the peaks, passes, and glaciers of the neighbouring Alps; and Karl Vogt contributed a treatise on the eggs of the *Philodina roseola*, and that curious creature the glacier flea (*Desoria glacialis*).

Zybach enjoyed, moreover, the rare distinction of being a prophet in his own country. He was as much esteemed by his neighbours as by his guests. Bound by his contract with the land-

schaft to keep the house open all the year round, he performed his duties of good Samaritan so generously, was so good to the poor, and so public-spirited withal, that his name was held in honour in the cantons of Berne, Uri, and Valais, and in all the region of the Helvetic Alps. During the sixteen years of their tenure of the Hospice there was probably in the whole of Switzerland no happier family than the Zybachs, none whose future seemed brighter or more assured. But, in 1852, there befell a terrible calamity, which brought ruin and degradation in its train, marred their fair prospects for ever, and made the name of Zybach as painfully notorious as it had once been widely respected.

In 1852 it became a question of renewing Zybach's lease, which expired at the end of the following year. That it would be renewed the spittler made no doubt, for he had come to look upon the house as virtually his own. He was attached to the place; he counted on ending his days there; he hoped that his son would be spittler after him, and that the Hospice would be a living for his children when he was gone. But

Zybach was too popular and prosperous not to have enemies, some of whom held high office in the landschaft. When he requested a renewal of his lease, unexpected difficulties arose. Under the old lease he had paid a rent of two thousand five hundred and thirty-six francs, including the privilege of making a collection throughout Switzerland for the maintenance of the Hospice in the winter months. In effect, therefore, the landschaft sold the right of asking alms, and made a profit by pleading poverty. But however much they made they wanted to make more; and on the ground that the Hospice had greatly improved in value they demanded a considerable increase of rent. Zybach admitted the improvement, but asserted that it was almost entirely due to his own outlay and his own exertions, and offered three thousand francs a-year. This offer was refused with something like contempt. Angry words followed, and a few days afterwards Zybach was told that the landschaft had found another spittler, and that he must give up possession of the Hospice on the expiration of his lease.

This was a terrible blow to Zybach. Leaving

the Grimsel seemed to him like the end of the world. He had been the spittler sixteen years; his name was identified with the Hospice; it had been mentioned in scores of guide-books; he had friends all over Europe; he was held in high honour by his neighbours, and looked upon himself—with reason—as the first man in that part of the country. Who was there in the Bernese Oberland, in Uri, in the Valais, or even in Lucerne, that had not heard of Peter Zybach? And now in his old age—he was verging on seventy—he was threatened with the loss of the position he had so arduously won and of which he was so justly proud. And this was not all: heavy pecuniary loss stared him in the face. In the belief that his lease would be renewed he had been at great expense in enlarging, and otherwise improving, the Hospice—an expense in respect of which he had no legal claim for compensation from the landschaft; and he knew the landschaft too well to expect anything from their goodwill. All these things preyed on Zybach's mind. A man naturally of genial disposition and a cheerful countenance, he became dull, morose, and heavy-eyed.

His fits of despondency, varied by occasional savage outbreaks of temper, made those about him fear for his sanity.

He came one night to his wife, as she afterwards told, crying bitterly, wringing his hands, and begging of her to save him.

"Save thee from what, my poor Peter?" she asked.

But that he could not tell, or would not, and the alarming thought occurred to her that her husband might be meditating suicide.

This was the position of things at the end of the season of 1852, when the Zybachs, in accordance with their usual custom, broke up their summer establishment, dismissed their fifty or sixty domestics, and went to Oberstein, near Meiringen, where they generally passed the winter. Three men-servants (*winterknechte*, as they were called) were left in charge of the Hospice, the spittler being bound by his contract to keep the house open all the year round.

After the removal to Oberstein Peter became a little less gloomy and more like his former self, and in the middle of November he went on a journey into the Valais.

The day after his departure one of the *knechte* came to Oberstein with the startling news that the Hospice had been burnt to the ground. The fire had broken out in the night, he said, and it burnt so fiercely and so fast that he and his companions had barely time to escape with their lives, and they feared that a poor traveller who was lodging in the house, and to whose imprudence they had reason to believe the fire was due, had perished in the flames. At anyrate, he had not been seen since, and the fire broke out in that part of the building where he slept.

So soon as news of the disaster reached Zybach in the Valais he returned home in all haste, and after visiting the ruined Hospice and conferring with his servants, he sent, as in duty bound, notice of the fire to the statthalter (justice of the peace) at Oberhasli, and to the insurance companies concerned. The building was insured by the landschaft, the contents by Zybach himself; but as he was not fully covered, and would in any event be a heavy loser, much sympathy was felt for the spittler in the cruel misfortune that had overtaken him.

A few days after the fire the statthalter, accom-

panied by the representatives of the two insurance companies in which the Hospice and furniture were insured, made an official visit of inspection to the Grimsel. They found the Hospice a complete ruin. A few articles only, of which the value might be two thousand francs, had been saved. No trace of the body of the stranger who was said to have perished could be found. This circumstance, the manner of the three men, certain inconsistencies in their statements, and one or two other signs, suggested to the minds of the statthalter some very unpleasant suspicions, and after taking counsel with the insurance agents, it was resolved that they should return the following day, bring their own men, and make a thorough search of the premises.

They went a second time accordingly. Peter Zybach was there to meet them, but only two of the servants were present. The third had disappeared.

This was another suspicious circumstance. Still more suspicious was the finding, in a midden behind the house, of fourteen cases of wine and spirits, four casks of beer, and a number of cheeses, hidden in a heap of hay.

Zybach did not seem in the least disconcerted. He accounted for the presence of the wine in the midden by explaining that it had been put there to preserve it from the frost, a thing that was always done in the beginning of winter. In his preoccupation the day before, he had forgotten to mention the circumstance, an inadvertence for which he thought he might well be excused.

"And the cheeses were put in the hay to keep them from the mice, I suppose," said the statthalter grimly, as he made a sign to his men to continue the search.

In an outhouse other things were found—furniture, bedding, cases of glass and pottery—and behind the rocks on the Seemätteli, hard by the tarn, still more were unearthed.

The statthalter, now fully convinced not only that the Hospice had been purposely destroyed, but that the spittler himself had planned the deed, remarked, with a pitying surprised look: "I am sorry for you, Zybach; you are a very unfortunate man."

On this, Zybach's assumed composure completely left him. He seemed for the first time to realise the terrible position in which he stood—

for by the law of Berne the doom of fire-raising was death. He turned as pale as the snowflakes on the rocks, heavy drops of sweat rolled down his cheeks. He tried to speak, but could not, and then, throwing up his hands with a gesture of despair, he ran forward a few paces and plunged head foremost into the dark waters of the tarn. One of the men dived after him; he was rescued in a lifeless condition, and with great difficulty restored to consciousness.

After this incident the statthalter thought it his duty to give Zybach into custody, and the spittler was removed to Meiringen, where he was examined and committed for trial at the ensuing Thun assizes.

The three *knechte* were also arrested, and committed for trial. Before the trial came on they all made a full confession. The names of them were Caspar Alpanalp, Heinrich Alpanalp, and Heinrich Blatter. The two former were brothers; Blatter was their brother-in-law. Caspar Alpanalp, who had been in Zybach's service fifteen years, deposed that, shortly after the spittler had engaged him as one of the *winterknechte*, he took him aside one day and said that he wanted the

Hospice to be burnt down—not to hurt anybody, but in order that he might build another and a better house, and find employment in the following spring for the working people of the neighbourhood. If Caspar would lend a helping hand he should have seven hundred and fifty francs for his trouble. Caspar, after some hesitation, accepted the offer, stipulating, however, that he should not be called upon actually to set the house on fire. He must draw the line somewhere, and he drew it at applying the torch. For this part of the business he recommended his brother-in-law, Blatter, who, having served in the armies of France, Holland, and Naples, might be presumed to possess fewer scruples—and more experience in the art of fire-raising—than folks that had spent all their lives in the Oberland. Blatter, on being sounded by Zybach, expressed himself quite willing to undertake the job and keep silence afterwards. He was a poor man with a large family, and the tender of seven hundred and fifty francs was probably a temptation that he could not resist. Heinrich Alpanalp was subsequently brought into the plot, though why, unless to keep the other two company, does not seem very clear.

According to the testimony of Caspar Alpanalp and Blatter, Zybach superintended the removal of the property in person, and promised them, if they did their work well, a further sum of one thousand five hundred francs. When these arrangements were completed, Blatter went to Thun to buy sulphur and other combustibles, and Zybach started on his journey for the Valais, so that he might be out of the way when the plot was consummated.

On the 15th of November the three *knechte* disposed the sulphur among some heaps of shavings which had been saturated with oil, and so distributed them as to make success certain. Their next proceeding was to fetch wine and brandy from the midden and have a big drink. When the conspirators thought the night was sufficiently advanced, and their courage had been screwed up to the sticking-point, Blatter (though not without some urging from the Alpanalps) went into the dining-room and set fire to the shavings.

Three hours later the Grimsel Hospice was a heap of smoking ruins.

The story of the mysterious traveller was a

clumsy fiction, invented to account for the origin of the fire.

In May, 1853, all the prisoners were arraigned for trial at Thun. Zybach, finding it impossible to struggle against the overwhelming circumstantial evidence and the terrible testimony of his accomplices, confessed his guilt, and made a pathetic appeal for mercy.

"I admit my guilt," he said. "I have ruined both myself and my family. Let those who hear me take warning from my fate. The aim of my whole life was to work and save for myself and my children, and to be useful to the landschaft; yet now, by one evil deed, am I plunged into darkness and sin, and stand in the shadow of death. I have been honoured and respected by many here present, by none more than by the judges who have now to pass sentence on me, and whose pity I earnestly beseech. I know that I deserve punishment—chains and a dungeon—and I will not attempt to extenuate my offence. I ask only for myself and my accomplices, whom I have brought to ruin, the mildest doom which it may be in your power to award. I ask this also for the sake of my poor wife and children."

Notwithstanding this appeal the jury found Zybach guilty, without extenuating circumstances, of having maliciously and revengefully incited his servants to set fire to the Grimsel Hospice. Thirty years ago the criminal code of Berne was of Draconian severity. Blatter and the two Alpanalps, although the jury gave them the benefit of extenuating circumstances, were sentenced to twelve years' imprisonment in chains. Zybach was condemned to death by beheading. On appeal to the great council of the canton this punishment was commuted to twenty years' imprisonment in chains—for a man of the spittler's age a doom hardly less terrible than death.

In the mere incidents of this story there is nothing extraordinary—nothing to distinguish it from many others that might be told—since fire-raising in Switzerland, either for gain or revenge, is unhappily by no means a rare offence. Its singularity lies in Zybach's motive, which the verdict of the jury neither correctly denotes nor sufficiently explains. How came it that a man of sixty-four, a man whose blameless character and unbroken success in life proved him to be possessed both of conscience and understanding,

should conceive and execute a crime involving so frightful a risk, a crime that neither promised gave nor gratified revenge? For it was clearly shown that, even if Zybach had succeeded in secreting and turning to account the things his men stowed away, he would still have been a heavy loser—his furniture and other belongings being only partially insured. The landschaft, on the other hand, being fully insured, could take no harm by the destruction of their property. Why then, it will be asked, did Zybach, at the risk of his life, compass the burning of the Hospice? To burn down a house seems a strange expedient to get reinstated as its tenant. The spittler may have reasoned in this way: The Hospice being well insured and yielding a handsome rent would certainly be rebuilt. Of that there could be no doubt. In order to have the new house ready for the reception of guests by the opening of the next season the work would have to be taken energetically in hand the moment the weather permitted. To this end a man of energy, resource, and capacity would be wanted—a man whose personal interest was identified with the speedy execution of the undertaking, and who could

guarantee its completion within a given time. One man alone, thought Peter Zybach, possessed these qualifications, and he made up his mind that the landschaft (with whom the fire could not fail to open the way to a renewal of their former friendly relations) would gladly avail themselves of his services and advice, and, in the upshot, grant him another lease on favourable terms. In any case—albeit events might not take precisely the turn he anticipated—with the blind hopefulness of a morally drowning man he persuaded himself that the burning down of the Hospice would, in one way or another, turn to his advantage. As to the moral character of the act—well, nobody, save the insurance companies, would suffer; and was not prompt payment of losses, in consideration of premiums received, their special business and the sole justification of their existence? An occasional fire was even conducive to their interests; it served as an excellent advertisement, and brought home to people in a very telling way the benefit of insuring and the expediency of a prompt renewal of their expiring policies. Many a man, who would not for the world defraud a neighbour, does not scruple to cheat a company.

If, as has been said, corporations are without conscience, those who deal with them are often, for the nonce, equally ill provided.

The strangest part of the affair is, perhaps, Zybach's obliviousness to the risk he ran of being found out; that for so very problematical an advantage he should have imperilled the prospects of his children and risked his own life. Even if the insurance people had suspected nothing, and paid him the amount of his loss without hesitation or demur, it is little likely that the guilty knowledge which he shared with three of his servants could have been long kept secret. His accomplices, moreover, could have held him at their mercy, and he would have had to spend the rest of his days in a miserable state of terror and suspense, with a Damocles' sword perpetually hanging over his head. But Peter was desperate, and desperation does not balance probabilities—it acts. The fear of falling often exercises a greater influence over men's conduct than either avarice or ambition, and men of a certain stamp will go to greater lengths to keep what they have than to gain what they covet. This sort of a man seems to have been Peter Zybach. The keeping of an alpine hostelry,

among a bleak wilderness of mountains, where "the snowflake reposes" all the year round, though an undeniably elevated calling, may not appear to everybody an especially enviable lot, yet Zybach staked life and liberty in a reckless attempt to retain his position as spittler of the Grimsel—a position that he identified with his social standing, and which to him, who began life as a goatherd, seemed almost the highest a man could occupy.

It is in the very nature of things that the punishments inflicted by human tribunals should be haphazard and unequal—in some cases inadequate, in others excessive—and they who think that justice is most just when tempered with mercy may well be of opinion that for Zybach's high offence—the only one in an otherwise reputable life—even his commuted sentence was too severe a penalty. And this seems to have been the opinion of the authorities of the canton; for after a few years' imprisonment in chains his sentence was commuted to banishment for life. Peter then went to Elsass, whence, after a time, he addressed a touching appeal to the Government, to be allowed to return to his native land. He was old and homesick, he said; his days were

not long, and he yearned to see "the smoke of his village" once more ere he died.

"The smoke of his village." Poor old Zybach!

Who that knows Switzerland—who that has seen the smoke of an alpine village curling past the dark pine-wood, and losing itself in the mists above which tower the glacier and the avalanche—that has heard the joedel of the goatherd among the rocks—the tinkling of cattle-bells in the mountain pastures—the rush of the torrent through the gorge, can help feeling the pathos of the broken man's prayer and pitying his fate?

But Zybach had sinned, and he was constrained to drink the cup of his punishment to the dregs. The Government did not deem it expedient to grant his request, and the Spittler of the Grimsel died in exile.

THE DRUID STONE OF VERSONNEX.

THE DRUID STONE OF VERSONNEX.

FEW, probably, of the thousands of travellers who every year visit the spot rendered famous, if not sacred, by the philosopher of Fernex (which in these latter days has taken to itself the name of Fernex-Voltaire), are aware that they make at the same time an excursion into the land of Gex, a land that yields to none north of the Alps in picturesque scenery, historic interest, and romantic association. Though the Pays de Gex is one of the very smallest of countries, extending only from a point on the Rhone outside Genevan territory to the River Divonne, and from the Jura to Lake Leman, and is now little more than a geographical expression, it has retained its present designation from prehistoric times.

For four hundred and sixty-four years Gex was under the domination of Rome; for one hundred and twenty-eight years it formed part of the first Burgundian kingdom; for upwards of two centuries it was ruled by Frankish kings; for half a century by Bosson, king of Arles. Then it was annexed to the second Burgundian kingdom. From 1032 to 1218 it was an appanage of the Holy Roman Empire; for one hundred and three years thereafter the masters of the country were its own seigneurs; from them it passed to the dukes of Savoy, who kept it until they were driven out by the men of Berne in 1536. In 1589 the Bernese left the land once more to the Savoyards, who held it for twenty-five years, when they were again dispossessed—this time by the allied troops of France and the Swiss cantons. A few months later it was reconquered by the Duke of Savoy, but only to fall the same year (1590) into the hands of the Genevans, who retained possession of the Pays for eleven years, when it was ceded by treaty to Henry IV., king of France. Finally, in 1815, the land of Gex was partitioned between France and Switzerland; so that several of the communes which

anciently formed a part of the Pays belong now to the canton of Geneva, while the remaining, and greater, part is included in the French department of the Ain.

If I add that the Pays de Gex has been visited by some of the greatest men and most famous conquerors the world has known; that it has been traversed by the legions of Julius Cæsar, the hordes of Attila, the hosts of Charlemagne, and the armies of Napoleon; devastated in turn by Helvetians, Gauls, Huns, Teutons, Burgundians, Saracens, Savoyards, Swiss, Spaniards, and Frenchmen, it will be seen that the narrow strip of land between the Jura Mountains and the Lake of Geneva has been the theatre of great events, and that its claims to historic and archæologic interest are more than justified.

The aboriginal inhabitants of the land were of the Keltic race. They have left traces of their presence in the names of the streams and mountains, and in Druids' stones, which even yet are regarded by simple-minded Gexians as something mysterious and sacrosanct.

Not very long ago the authorities of Geneva conceived the idea of carrying away, and placing

in the Botanic Garden of the city, the great Druid Stone of Troinex, known as the Pierre aux Dames. The project went so far that a trench was dug about the block, rollers were on the spot, and the removal was about to begin, when the people of the neighbourhood raised such an outcry and besought the Council of State so earnestly to let the stone be, that the order was countermanded, and the Pierre aux Dames of Troinex still remains undisturbed where it has lain for unnumbered ages.

It used to be believed in days gone by (and the belief probably still lingers in the remoter parts of the Pays de Gex) that the Pierre aux Dames, and the three Druid stones between Versonnex and Grelly, were thrown thither in sport by the giants who, according to tradition, once dwelt in the fastnesses of the Jura. Another legend has it that the giants placed the stones in their present situation to protect the treasures which are supposed to be buried at immeasurable depths underneath them. These treasures are further and more effectually guarded by the giants' curse, which will pursue anybody who attempts to destroy or remove the stones; and it is

a well-known fact that evil has never failed to befall the reprobates who have dared to lay unhallowed hands on these mysterious relics of the past. Of this the following story affords fearful proof.

Once upon a time, some hundred and fifty years ago—though the precise date is perhaps not of great importance—there lived in the village of Versonnex, which is not far from Divonne (signifying in Keltic speech the Springs of the Gods), a young well-to-do peasant of the name of Gaspard. He had inherited from his father and mother, who died when he was a little child, several rich meadows, a piece of woodland, a fine vineyard planted on the sunny slope of the hill, and an excellent stone-built house, close to the little river Ondar, which runs through the village and passes near the churchyard. By the careful husbandry of his uncle, in whose charge it had been left, Gaspard's property was so improved during his minority that, when he came of age, he was one of the richest peasants in the countryside. But this proved a questionable advantage to him, since instead of living carefully and looking after his fields and his vineyards himself, as if he had been less

well-off he would have had to do, and as his father had done before him, he left the management of his affairs to hired servants, and spent the greater part of his time in idleness and dissipation. He would take his gun and his dog and wander for days together in the forest of the Dôle and the Reculet. He was a great player at bowls, an adept in all games of skill and chance, and so strong and fearless withal, that not a youth in the village dared say him nay. They called him Wild Gaspard, and old people, when his name was mentioned, would shake their heads and look unutterable things. His uncle alone seemed to have faith in him—appeared, indeed, rather proud of the noise his nephew was making, and gave it as his opinion that, when Gaspard found a wife, he would mend his ways and settle down to steady work, like other folks. But notwithstanding his dark handsome face and tall stature and broad shoulders, the more respectable of the maidens of the village looked on the youth with little favour. Perhaps this was because two or three girls who had been seen in his company were afterwards ill spoken of, almost lost their characters indeed.

But be the cause what it might, Gaspard remained so long single that when the uncle died his nephew was still a bachelor, nor did the old man's death work the slightest change in the nephew's conduct. He was as wild as ever, stayed out late at night, drank, gambled, and spent so much money that the village wiseacres said he was running fast through his property, and foretold speedy ruin.

But so far from growing poorer, Gaspard seemed to grow richer; instead of mortgaging his meadows and selling his vines, he put money out at interest and bought land. More than one of his neighbours who had prophesied his ruin became his debtors for money lent.

All this terribly puzzled the good folks of Versonnex, and many a hard-handed close-fisted peasant, who had given the greater part of a long life of ferocious self-denial to the task of filling an old stocking (hidden away in the thatch) with *écus*, passed sleepless nights in wondering how Wild Gaspard contrived both to spend and to have, and in envying his good fortune.

At length chance did for Gaspard what he had not yet been able to do for himself, or, at

any rate, what he had not done—found him a wife. It befell on this wise. One evening, just as the sun, sinking fiery red behind the Jura, had turned the silvery vapour which hovered over the Alps and floated above the valley of Sixt into golden cloud, Gaspard, on his way through the village to his house by the river, was accosted by a young girl with a bundle on her arm. She asked to be directed to the dwelling of a peasant who lived not far off, and whom Gaspard well knew. Struck by the girl's appearance—for she was young, pretty, modest-looking, and well clad, and seemed, moreover, as if weary with long walking—he offered to accompany her to her destination and insisted on carrying her bundle. She accepted his offer with many thanks, and told him as they went along that the peasant after whom she had inquired was her uncle, that she had come on a visit to him, that her home was in the Chablais, and her name Marie.

"Here is your Uncle Jean's house," said Gaspard, after they had walked about a mile. "I must now leave you. But this is the time when lads and lasses burn nuts to find out

their fortunes. I will come one of these nights and we will see if we cannot find out yours and mine."

The young man was as good as his word. The very next evening he went to Uncle Jean's, and Marie and he and the Uncle's sons and daughters burnt nuts together, told tales, and tried to find out their fortunes. He proved himself the best tale-teller of the company, and made himself so agreeable withal that the cousins, of both sexes, pressed him to come again; and when he was gone, all agreed that Wild Gaspard was, after all, a very nice fellow, or, at any rate, not nearly so black as he had been painted.

Marie did not think him black at all; for when, a month or two later, he asked her to be his wife, she did not say nay; and as Gaspard, since his acquaintance with Marie, had given up his evil ways—ceased to frequent the village auberge and bowling-alley, and went off no more on mysterious journeys into the mountains—Uncle Jean gave a willing consent to the betrothal. Before Christmas came they were married, and Marie, now Madame Gaspard, became mistress of the stone house by the river.

For some time after their marriage Gaspard was very steady and Marie very happy. He stayed at home, looked after his land and his cows, superintended the dressing of his vines, and altogether behaved so well that his neighbours, almost forgetting that they had ever called him "wild," began to look upon him as quite an exemplary husband and a respectable member of society. To crown the happiness of the young couple, two children were born to them, and, to all seeming, their lives were likely to prove as quiet and uneventful as those of any other peasants of the land of Gex. But whether it was that he began to weary of the monotony of married life and the company of his wife, or that the evil spirit, which his love for her had for a while exorcised, again possessed him, a great change came over Gaspard shortly after the birth of their second child. He grew morose and gloomy, went out at nights, and took long walks into the dark pine-forests that overspread the summits and slopes of the Jura. He no longer challenged young men to fight and wrestle as he once did; he seemed to have the power of daunting them with his look. The

neighbours began to dread and dislike him more than ever. They had good cause; for he grew very quarrelsome and went to law on the least provocation; and when he went to law he won as invariably as he was wont to do when he played at bowls or at cards in the village inn.

Among other folks with whom he fell out was his wife's uncle. One of Jean's fields adjoined one of his. In the middle of it was a big Druid Stone. This field Gaspard wanted to buy, but as it was the nearest to his own house, which Jean possessed, he refused to part with it. Hence arose a bitter quarrel; for the old man was obstinate and the young one persistent. In the end, Gaspard removed the landmark between the two fields, and drove his plough over a part of Jean's property; so that the uncle, in order to assert his right, was constrained to bring an action against his niece's husband. But before it had well begun, Jean became very uneasy; for his friends told him that Gaspard, having the ear of the judge was sure to win; so, lest worse should befall, Jean agreed to let his kinsman have the field at his own price.

As may well be supposed, this affair made Marie very unhappy; for her husband, whatever he might be to others, was still kind to her. The strife between him and her uncle, whom she greatly respected, had been a sore trouble, and when it ended her satisfaction was unbounded. In the village the incident gave rise to very ugly rumours; and the feeling against Gaspard, though none dared openly avow it, was stronger than before. There were stories of his having been seen near the Druid Stone at midnight; and old people told with bated breath how they had heard from their sires that the spot was haunted by one of the giant ghosts of the mountains, who went thither at stated times to watch over his hidden gold. It was said, too, that by the practice of certain pagan rites, known only to a few descendants of the ancient Allobroges, the former possessors of the land, men had sometimes compelled the giants to yield them a portion of their treasure and lend them a part of their strength. But it was affirmed, and firmly believed, that those who had dealings with these ghostly giants were accursed, and always in the end overtaken by dire misfortune.

These stories made such an impression in the village that Gaspard's house began to be looked upon as unlucky, and few entered it save on compulsion. When Marie and her two children fell ill of a fever Gaspard could get nobody in Versonnex to nurse them, and even at Gex the only person he could persuade to undertake the task was a woman known as Red Claudine, from the Franche-Comté, on the other side of the mountains. She was young and not unhandsome; but old Karl Saladan, who was generally acknowledged to be the wisest man in the village, said she had deceitful eyes and a cruel mouth, and was not to be trusted. Be that as it may, she nursed Marie and her children with great seeming devotion; but whether it was that she came too late, or they were doomed beforehand, the little ones died soon after her arrival, and were buried side by side in the churchyard near the river. People looked upon this as a judgment; there could be no longer a doubt, they said, that Gaspard had dealings with the giants, and that the curse was now beginning to work.

As Marie was still very sick, and at times delirious, her husband did not tell her at once of their

children's death. He feared she might die too; and his gloom was terrible to see. The night after the funeral she seemed rather better, and Gaspard, believing her to be asleep, stole quietly out of the house. As Claudine had gone down to the village, Marie was thus left alone.

After quitting the house Gaspard struck right across the fields, and did not stop until he reached the Druid Stone. There he paused, and looking towards the Col de la Fauçille by the light of the new moon, he repeated in a low voice what seemed to be an incantation. As he spoke, a vast shadowy form, in the shape of a man, emerged from the forest and drew near, until it stood over the stone. Its head overtopped the tallest oaks, and it carried in its hand, as a staff, the trunk of a young pine-tree.

"You called me," said the spectre, in a voice that sounded like distant thunder, "what is it you desire?"

"To tell you, first of all," answered Gaspard, who did not seem to be in the least afraid, "that the ground whereon we stand is mine. I have bought this field, and with it the stone."

"Bought it!" said the phantom, with a laugh

that made the trees sway to and fro, as if shaken by the wind. "Bought it! Why, in the fiend's name, did you buy the field when you could have taken it? What use is the strength I gave you—that you cajoled me out of rather—if you buy things? Any fool can buy."

"That is true; but you forget, most worshipful giant, what sort of a world this is—how it has degenerated since you lived and lorded it on the mountain there with your kinsfolk and slaves. You were very strong, I know, but there is a power nowadays stronger than all the giants that ever dwelt on the Jura put together. This power is called the Law, and those who defy it always come off second best. You may meet it by cunning, perhaps, but you cannot overcome it by force. Therefore I bought the field. I thought you would be glad to know that it was mine, and that we might meet henceforth on my own land."

"Humph!" said the giant, who did not appear to be in the best of tempers, "that makes very little difference to me. Did you think the owner of the field was likely to use this terrible Law against me—lay an action against me for trespass, eh? It will be a long time before they get me

into a court of justice, I think. But what else do you desire? You surely have not called me here to tell me that you have bought a field."

"I want to know something. Will my wife live?"

"As long as you let her, she will live," answered the giant, with a scornful laugh that made Gaspard tremble, bold as he was. "Anything else?"

"Yes, I want some more gold."

"Gold, gold! Why, man, you are always wanting gold. What do you do with it all? But hear this—no more gold from me shall you have."

"Well then, I shall take it," said Gaspard defiantly. "I shall dig under the stone, or blow it up with gunpowder, and help myself to whatever of your treasure there is left."

"You miserable wretch!" roared the enraged giant; "I'll brain you where you stand," and, raising the pine-tree high above his head, he made as if he would carry his threat into instant execution.

"Ah, ha!" laughed Gaspard, "you cannot; you are powerless. Did you not tell me that when your body cast no shadow in the moonlight your arm had no pith. Strike, I am not afraid."

"You ungrateful scoundrel!" thundered the giant, letting fall his upraised staff. "Is this my reward for telling you so many high secrets, for giving you half my treasure, for making you the strongest and richest man in the Pays de Gex! True, I am a poor ghost without physical strength, and my club is but a shadow, yet I have a terrible power you wot not of. I can curse, and my curse is all potent. And now, Gaspard of Versonnex, I curse you and your house with the curse of a giant of the Jura. May evil befall you in this world and the next; may your life be misery, and your death damnation!"

As the ghostly form of the giant disappeared in the darkness the last words of his malediction rang through the forest, and were given back with fearful distinctness by the echoes of the mountain.

When Gaspard, after a few moments spent in deep thought, turned to go, a white figure sprang from behind the stone and stood before him in the path.

"Oh Gaspard, Gaspard!" exclaimed a voice he well knew, "in the name of Heaven and the holy Virgin come not here again. Avoid this spot, it is thrice accursed."

It was Marie, and before her husband had recovered from his surprise, she sank fainting on the ground.

Stooping over her prostrate form, he gazed intently in her face. Then he drew from his belt a long glittering knife. It flashed in the moonlight.

"No!" he muttered, as if struck by a sudden impulse, or moved by some tender recollection. "She is delirious; she has followed me without intention. Maybe she has seen nothing, or, if she has, will not remember. I will take her with me."

He raised her in his arms, and carried her home; and when Red Claudine returned there was nothing to show that either of them had been out of the house.

Marie recovered her health, but not her spirits. Her illness, her children's death, the conduct of her husband, and, perhaps, the recollection of the scene at the Druid Stone, had transformed the once happy wife into a joyless woman. She went about like one in a dream, rarely spoke, and seemed glad that Red Claudine, who showed no inclination to depart, took all the management of the house and dairy. Gaspard, who watched

his wife closely, thought she remembered nothing of what had passed on the night of his interview with the phantom, and he began to carry out his resolve to uplift the stone. By assiduous drilling and a free use of gunpowder, he broke off three long slabs, which he proposed to convert into doorsteps. The last of them had been brought down to the house before Marie knew what was going on.

When she saw them she turned deadly pale, and almost fell to the ground.

"Oh Gaspard!" she exclaimed, "what are you doing? Do you want to ruin yourself both in this world and the next? Have you forgotten that terrible night at the Druid Stone and the spectre's curse?"

The next day, when Red Claudine went into the village to make her purchases, she told that poor Madame Gaspard had fallen ill again of her old complaint. Those whom she told did not seem much surprised. They shook their heads, and said they feared it was likely this time to go hard with her. In this opinion Claudine, who looked very sorrowful, appeared quite to agree. "Madame Gaspard," she remarked, "had never

got over her last illness and the loss of her children; even before yesterday's attack came on she was very weak, and her husband had been greatly concerned about her. Still, there was no telling; she might pull through after all. They must trust in Heaven and the holy Virgin, and hope for the best. They were taking every care. Madame was never left alone. Either herself or Monsieur Gaspard was with her night and day." And Red Claudine wiped her eyes and heaved a deep sigh, as if the trouble were really more than she could bear.

The following day Claudine was in the village again, fuller of trouble than before. Poor Marie had died that morning, just as the day broke, and she was come to order the coffin, poor Monsieur Gaspard being quite beside himself with grief, and unable to stir out of the house.

Several of the neighbours who went to see the body before it was put out of sight, drew each other's attention to the tranquil expression of the face, and opined that poor Madame Gaspard must have died very peacefully. Claudine said she had, that she did not seem to suffer at all, passing away as if she were falling asleep.

Despite the awe and detestation in which Gaspard was held, the death of his two children, followed at so short an interval by that of his wife, touched his neighbours' hearts, and he received many tokens of their sympathy; but when, a few weeks after he had laid Marie in the grave, he led Claudine to the altar, great was their indignation, and he was shunned more than ever, but still so much feared that everybody carefully avoided giving him offence.

The Gex country is a land of gushing springs and running waters. The rivulets that traverse it are for the most part sufficiently well-behaved, and pass from their source in the Jura to their home in the blue depths of lake Leman, either silently and swiftly, or with no more ado than befits modest mountain-born streams. But sometimes their gentle waters, when swollen by autumnal rains, the melting of winter snows, or a summer thunderstorm, become the maddest of torrents—rise above their banks, sweep over fields and vineyards, and leave in their wake destruction and death.

The Ondar, which flows through Versonnex, is little more than a brook, and it seems almost

absurd to suggest that it could ever be a cause of apprehension or a source of danger. But one day in the autumn following the marriage of Gaspard and Red Claudine, a cloud broke over the Jura, and the stream filled so fast, and mounted so high, that the villagers were in great alarm, and those of them who lived on its banks left their houses and made hurried preparations to place their belongings in a place of safety. Just when the flood was at its height a huge pine-tree, which had been brought down from the mountains, got fixed transversely across the river in such a way as to impede the flow of the water. It soon became evident that, unless the obstruction could be instantly removed, the village would be completely inundated, and many of the buildings either destroyed or seriously damaged; a calamity that was only averted by the boldness and presence of mind of several young men of the village, who, heedless of danger, used the saw and hatchet to such purpose that the pine-tree was speedily dislodged from its place and floated away in the flood.

And then a strange and awesome thing happened. A gigantic ghost-like shape came out of

the driving rain, and, seizing the pine-tree in his hands, placed it a second time across the stream, but between the church and the houses, in such a position that the flood was turned through the churchyard, without endangering the village.

"Murder will out!" exclaimed the phantom, as he completed his task and sank down, as appeared to the awestruck beholders, into the raging torrent.

There being a rapid fall in the ground from this point to the churchyard, the stream poured into it with such violence that the tombstones were overturned, the earth washed away, many coffins swept from their graves, and the church itself almost destroyed.

After the subsidence of the flood—and it subsided almost as fast as it had risen—the first thought of the villagers was to put the churchyard in order, and to restore the dead to their graves. Only one of the coffins was found to be injured—that of Madame Gaspard. It had been burst open by the water, and lay several yards from the body which it had enclosed. Some of the men were just about to raise the poor corpse reverently from the ground, where it rested face downward, when

the sexton called attention to a peculiar appearance at the back of the head. Looking more closely the onlookers perceived a wound at the base of the skull, and found further that it had been caused by a large nail, which was there still. On this a great fear came over all, and they remembered the words of the phantom: "Murder will out."

Gaspard was at once arrested, and, seeing in the extraordinary revelation of his crime that the hand of God was against him, and that he was a doomed man, he owned himself guilty, confessing that he had put his wife to death to prevent her from betraying the secret of his unhallowed dealings with the giant of the Jura. He was taken to Gex, and there executed.

As for Red Claudine, when she saw the bodies strewn about the churchyard, she had been cunning enough to escape. It was believed she went into Savoy. Be that as it may, she was never seen in the Gex country again. Gaspard, before his death, became very penitent, and expressed great contrition for the terrible crimes of which he had been guilty—practising arts forbidden by the Church, and so cruelly killing his wife.

His fate has served as a salutary warning to succeeding generations. Nobody since his time has attempted to disturb the Druid Stone of Versonnex, or to hold converse with its guardian spirit; a circumstance which probably accounts for the entire disappearance in these latter days of the phantom giants of the Jura from their ancient haunts.

POTENTATE AND PARSON.

POTENTATE AND PARSON.

CHAPTER I.

THE LENKERHORN DYNASTY.

THE ruined castles and mouldering keeps that crown the wooded heights and naked rocks of "Free old Rhætia," a region known indifferently to the outer world as Graubünden and the Grisons, recall to the pensive wayfarer the age of chivalry and romance, the good old times when freebooter barons ruled in every valley of the Upper Rhine, living joyously on the fruits of their vassals' labour, and levying black mail on itinerant merchants and belated wanderers. The protection afforded by the lords of these castles to the tillers of the soil was dearly bought. They exacted from their unfortunate tenants so many dues, and laid on them so many grievous

burdens that their lives were hardly worth living, and it is almost a wonder that they consented to live.

Some of the feudal usages that came into vogue at the time in question outlasted the lordship of these rude chieftains. Even after the Thirty Years' War, when the Vorder Rhein country was wasted with fire and sword, and the Grisons passed temporarily under the domination of the house of Hapsburg, the Austrian nobles, to whom certain seignorial privileges were transferred with the properties they purchased and annexed, forced the wretched peasants, under one pretext and another, to surrender nearly all that was left of their poor possessions. But the issue of that terrible contest —in which, by the deplorable weakness of the Confederation, several of the northern cantons were forced to engage—was greatly to weaken the old feudal system. Many knightly landowners perished in the war, their castles became tenantless and fell into ruins, their estates passed into other hands, and the burghers were enabled to assert their time-honoured rights, and regain their ancient independence. But the

change, though salutary as far as it went, was far from being thorough. The day of democracy had not yet arrived, and the hewers of wood and drawers of water were not long in finding out that they had only exchanged one set of masters for another. Nevertheless, the second yoke was easier than the first.

Owing to circumstances which it is not necessary here to narrate, power in the rural communes of Rhætian Switzerland fell into the hands of a few families, who, albeit of the peasant class, formed a real hereditary caste, and in after years came to be known as magnates, kings of the valleys, and potentates of the village. Though they lived among their subjects, and, like them, had flocks and herds and mountain pastures, these families exercised almost despotic sway. Father was followed by son, if not by acknowledged hereditary right, by force of long custom. This yeoman-aristocracy revived for its own benefit many feudal usages, grew rich on the labour of others, after the manner of old aristocracies, and on great occasions displayed an almost princely pomp.

The French Revolution, which destroyed so

many things, put an end to all that remained of the feudal system in Switzerland, albeit the thorough emancipation of the Confederation from aristocratic fetters was the work of the present century.

With the cataclysms of 1792–1814 the legal sway of the village potentates of Graubünden finally disappeared. Such authority as they contrived, in the capacity of landammänner (communal presidents) and statthälter (justices of the peace), to retain, they owed to their own adroitness, to their comparative wealth, and to that respect for old families and ancient usages which survives so much longer in the country than the town.

One of the last of these rural sovereigns of Free old Rhætia was a certain Hans Lenkerhorn, who united in his own person the offices of landamman and statthalter of the confederate communes of Stein, Oberstein, and Niederstein. But in deference to the democratic tendencies of the age and, like the wise man he was, caring more for the substance than the shadow of power, he contented himself with the simple title of "amman."

Hans Lenkerhorn lived in the largest house in Oberstein, a house which, together with much cattle and many mountain pastures, he had inherited from Peter his father, who had been amman before him, and from whose venerable lips he had learnt priceless lessons in the art of government. For Peter was a born leader of men; and had his lot been cast in a higher sphere, a later age, and another country he might have emulated the fame of Bismarck or Cavour. The principle of his rule was, everything for the people and nothing by the people. When he watched the herd of beautiful cows (he would have none but the best) browsing on one of his alps, and saw how willingly they acknowledged the supremacy of the strongest and handsomest, he would call her the Queen of the Mountain, muttering to himself, as he stroked her comely neck:

"Ach Gott! these dumb creatures have more sense than thick-headed peasants, who find fault with their betters, and think, poor fools! that they understand affairs of state and are fit for self-government."

Besides his son Hans, Peter possessed a

daughter—a broad-backed, bright-eyed, rosy-cheeked mountain maid, of marriageable age. Though Frieda was a good child, and her father loved her, he often wished she had never been born.

Being a peasant of aristocratic instincts, he desired to transmit the whole of his property unimpaired to his son and heir. But as a man of his condition could neither marry his daughter without a handsome *mitgift* (dower) nor cut her off with the traditional shilling, the girl's existence threatened to interfere with his plans for the maintenance of the family dignity in succeeding generations.

Had the amman not been a Protestant he might possibly have persuaded his daughter to enter a convent. But there was nothing nun-like in the girl's character; and a hint from Frau Lenkerhorn that the marriage state was a state of unmitigated wretchedness, and that those were wisest who remained single, was so ill received (being answered by the remark that her mother did not seem particularly wretched, and that Liesa Lindau, who had been married the year before to the Alpvogt Christian, was

very happy) that the amman made up his mind to the worst, and asked his wife what she thought was the least *mitgift* they could decently bestow on the child.

This was rather a bothering question for the Frau Amman, for if she could have had her way she would have dealt the same measure to both her children. But to have hinted as much would have raised a storm; so, on the plea that the point was rather a knotty one, she asked time for consideration. Before she had done considering an event occurred that saved her the trouble of coming to a decision, and possibly prevented a dispute between her husband and herself. This event was the betrothal of their son Hans to the daughter of a neighbouring potentate as rich as Peter himself, and so well dowered withal that the amman felt he might now portion Frieda right royally, without endangering the heir-apparent's future position.

Soon after Hans' marriage, which was followed at a short interval by the marriage of Frieda, with a young man of her own rank and ample means, Peter resolved to abdicate in favour of his son and heir. He was growing old and feeble,

and he desired, before he died, to see the reins of government placed in younger and firmer hands. It was a degenerate age, and he feared that if he left things to the last the gemeinde (commune) might forget their duty and suffer some low-born interloper to step into his shoes. So, after a long and serious conversation with Hans, the amman summoned his privy council—Michael the spendvogt (treasurer), Christian the alpvogt, and Jos the writer—to hear his decision and receive his instructions. He intended, he said, at the approaching yearly meeting of the gemeinde to resign the office he had so long held, and it behoved them to think whom they would choose as his successor. On this, the spendvogt answered with a courtly smile that there was only one possible successor to the Herr Amman—that Lenkerhorn must succeed Lenkerhorn—and that the council would do all that was necessary to make the election of Herr Hans sure and spontaneous.

When the great day came, Peter, who, in spite of his fourscore years, was still a magnificent specimen of a mountain-bred man, standing in the place in which had stood five generations of his forefathers, announced his intention of resigning the honourable position he had so long

held. In an eloquent farewell speech, he thanked his fellow burghers for having so frequently elected him as their ruler and chief magistrate, and recommended them to choose as his successor the worthiest among them—the one best fitted to bear the burden of power and insure the prosperity of the confederate communes. On this there was a general call for Hans Lenkerhorn, and, no other candidate being proposed, old Peter, with well-feigned reluctance, and a deprecatory air, as if he felt that the slight services he had been able to render the gemeinde were receiving a far higher reward than they deserved, declared his son and heir the duly elected landamman and statthalter of the confederate communes of Stein, Oberstein, and Niederstein. Then he stepped down from his chair, and Hans was conducted to the seat of honour by Jos the writer and Michael the spendvogt. If the acclamations that followed the new amman's speech were a measure of its quality, it must have been fully worthy of the occasion. And so it doubtless was, for albeit Hans had not been highly educated, he possessed a shrewd mother-wit and a ready tongue. The speech, moreover, had been carefully prepared beforehand, and

rehearsed in the presence of the ex-amman and his privy council, whose long experience of affairs enabled them to make several suggestions which the young man was glad to adopt.

Peter's prescience was justified by the event. In less than three years after handing over the helm of state to his son, he was gathered to his fathers. He was buried in a manner befitting his rank and the custom of the country. All the men of the confederate communes followed the ex-amman's body to the grave. After the funeral there came a mighty drink, a drink worthy of a banquet of Teutonic warriors or of an Irish wake of the last century. The Lenkerhorns kept open house, and so copious were the libations of schnapps poured out in honour of the old potentate's memory that hardly one guest went home sober, or awoke next morning without a splitting headache. Two old men from Stein and a young man from Niederstein did not awake at all. But a time-honoured custom had been well kept, the splendid hospitality of Amman Hans won him great popularity, and, together with other incidents of the funeral, was the favourite theme in the village ale-house for years thereafter.

CHAPTER II.

THE NEW PASTOR.

AMID a generation growing almost every day more impatient of legitimate authority and less reverent of ancient customs, Hans Lenkerhorn was now left to maintain alone the supremacy of his house. But he had qualities that eminently fitted him for the task. While quite his father's equal in ability he was far more politic and patient. Though in character no less resolute than his predecessor he was less absolute in manner. He studied government as a fine art, had learnt that to conquer it was sometimes necessary to stoop, knew when to yield and when to insist; and, although during his long reign many attempts were made to oust him from power, he died landamman and statthalter of the confederate communes. The greatest difficulty he encountered

arose out of a conflict with the Church, in the person of one of its ministers, a conflict which he conducted with a craft and subtlety that, had they been displayed in a wider field, would have won for him the reputation of a great statesman.

So long as old Pastor Greis was able to perform his duty, nothing could be more harmonious than the relations of Church and State in the gemeinde of Oberstein. The pastor was a good easy soul, who never tried to force water uphill nor smoke downhill. In other words he let the world wag—never embroiling himself with the amman by meddling with politics, nor risking his popularity by attempting to amend the morals or improve the manners of his flock. But even in the mountains of Rhætia men grow old, and the time came when, after having had spiritual charge of Oberstein more than seventy years, the Herr Pastor felt himself constrained to retire from the active duties of his calling. He was succeeded by a young man fresh from the university, recommended by the consistory, and elected by the gemeinde, of course at the instance of the amman, for Hans at that time wielded almost as much power in Oberstein as Bismarck now wields in

Germany. Hans thought that a young man would be more submissive to authority and fall more readily into the ways of the gemeinde than a man of mature age.

As touching young men in general, Hans may have been right; but, as touching this particular young man, the event proved him to be wrong.

On the day appointed for the arrival of Herr Schuster, the amman sent Fritz the vorsteher (head-man) down to the Chur road to meet him, and place one of his best horses at the pastor's disposal. When the young man knew what was expected of him, he manifested some alarm, for equitation had not been included in his college course, and he had never bestridden a steed in his life. But when the vorsteher assured him that it was an old custom for a new pastor to enter the commune on horseback, he allowed himself to be persuaded, and with much trepidation, and on the strict understanding that Fritz should lead the horse every bit of the way, he got into the saddle. Beyond the feeling of discomfort occasioned by the unwonted motion, the Herr Pastor took no harm by his ride, and he had the satisfaction of knowing that he made his entry into the village

in the same fashion as his predecessors had done from time immemorial.

All the gemeinde and several strangers from a distance were at church when Karl Schuster preached himself in. Everybody wanted to see what like of a man was the new pastor, and how he would comport himself on so trying an occasion. As he followed the advice of Dr. Martin Luther, "Tritt frisch auf und thu das Maul auf" (keep cool and open your mouth), and was not wanting in capacity, he delivered an excellent discourse, and came off with flying colours. One of his observations: "As God gives me strength, I will teach and console, and, need arising, I will admonish and reprove, without respect of persons," had, however, so revolutionary a ring, and was so different from anything old Pastor Greis had ever said, that it caused quite a sensation, and every eye was turned to the landamman to see how the sentiment liked him. But Hans possessed a face of Disraeli-like impassiveness, and, though he had doubtless his thoughts, he made no sign.

When, a few days later, the Herr Pastor called on the Herr Amman, he was received with a

great show of cordiality. Hans congratulated him on his sermon, asked many questions concerning his life at the university, and expressed a hope that they should be good friends.

A week after Karl Schuster had preached his first sermon the cattle came down from the mountains where they had been pasturing during the brief but brilliant alpine summer. With them came the children who had watched and tended them, eager after their long holiday for their winter schooling (which lasts generally from October to the end of May) to begin. But education was not yet compulsory in Switzerland, and the pastor, to his great surprise, discovered that, though Oberstein possessed a schoolhouse, it had just then no schoolmaster. The highest salary the amman could be persuaded to propose, or the gemeinde to sanction, was one hundred gulden (about eight pounds) a-year. No fit man could be got for the place, and for two winters the Oberstein children had received no instruction whatever.

This greatly grieved the pastor. He thought it ill for children to grow up in ignorance, and spend more than half the year in idleness. Moved

by these considerations, and, perhaps, by a perfectly pardonable desire to add to his own poor stipend of four hundred gulden (thirty-three pounds) the pay allotted to the schoolmaster, he offered to take the vacant place until some better arrangement could be made. The proposal was hailed with acclamation by all the fathers and mothers of the commune, part of whom had viewed with considerable dissatisfaction the prospect of their children running wild about the place for the next seven or eight months. So the schoolhouse was opened, and the pastor entered on the duties of his new office. He found the undertaking more arduous than he had expected. The teaching of sixty children every day, in addition to preaching on Sundays, and other ministerial duties, taxed his strength to the utmost, and he was heartily glad when the disappearance of the snow from the lower alps gave the signal for the migration of the cattle and their little watchers to the mountain pastures.

"The Herr Pastor looks ill," observed, one day about this time, Christian the alpvogt to Michael the spendvogt. "When he first came here his face was plump and rosy; now he is

lantern-jawed, as pale as a snow-drift, and as thin as an icicle."

"Yes, indeed," answered the spendvogt, whose opinions were generally a faithful reflex of those of his master. "The Herr Pastor takes too much upon himself, and in more ways than one. What business has he to play the schoolmaster? He forgets that it is not good for a man to serve two masters. No wonder he looks ill."

But well or ill, Schuster was not the man to draw back his hand from the plough; and great was the joy in Oberstein when, as winter once more drew near, he announced his intention of reopening the school. He was far superior to any teacher the gemeinde had ever before possessed, and as his pay was really next to nothing, the thrifty Obersteiners had every reason to be satisfied with the arrangement. They got high quality at a low price; and, to do them justice, they were not ungrateful. If thanks could enrich, the Herr Pastor would have been a wealthy man.

CHAPTER III.

THE AMMAN AND HIS COUNCILLORS.

"I HAVE news for you, Hans," said to him one day his wife, on her return from a visit to her old godmother in Niederstein, a week or two after the school had broken up for the summer. "Do you know what they say? They say that our pastor, under the plea of bettering his health after his winter's work, is always afoot, and goes a good deal to Warden Konrad's in Niederstein. But you may be sure of one thing—it is not the warden or the Frau Warden he cares about; it is the buxom Klara, who inherits a handsome fortune from her aunt Mathilde. These ghostly gentlemen, who talk so much about heavenly treasures, are as keen as other folks to lay up for themselves treasures on earth. But do you think it would be wise, dear Hans, to let him

have Klara? My father, of blessed memory, used often to say that it was ever so much easier to keep a poor parson in his place than a rich one. Rich ministers are always so prodigal and independent."

"Don't let the pastor's doings make you any gray hairs, Gretha dear," answered her husband, with the air of a man conscious of foreseeing everything. "I heard of these visits to Niederstein several days since, and Spendvogt Michel has already dropped a few words into the warden's ear, that will, I think, put a spoke in the parson's wheel, and cause him to take his walks in another direction."

"I know you are very wise, Hanschen," answered the Frau Amman (who, if she had confessed the truth, was rather annoyed to find that her news was old, and that her advice had been anticipated), "and it is not for me to set up my opinion against yours, but don't you think, now it would have been better to get a proper schoolmaster, even if it did cost a little more? It is Schuster's teaching, more than his preaching, that makes him so well liked. Indeed, when he preaches against schnapps, as he did last Sunday,

and calls it 'the enemy,' he treads on a good many folks' toes. They say, as I say, that it is his business to preach the gospel, and that when he tells people what they should eat and drink he is meddling with what doesn't concern him, and flying in the face of scripture. Doesn't the holy writing say, 'Take no thought what ye shall eat or what ye shall drink'?"

"There you are right, Gretha," observed Hans, as he puffed energetically at his long pipe. "Schuster is becoming altogether too meddlesome; but as for engaging a schoolmaster at high pay, I have very good reasons for doing as I have done. You must remember that the gemeinde is not very well off this year. That flood in March made sad havoc, and the avalanche last month laid low a thousand trees in the Tannenwald. We shall have to spend at least five hundred florins this summer in replanting. We have no money to throw away on schools and schoolmasters, I can tell you; and I have other reasons."

For all this disclaimer, the amman knew quite well that he had made a mistake; but it was his maxim, as it had been his father's, to hold fast

by whatever he had once said, and never to acknowledge himself in the wrong.

Before Frau Lenkerhorn had made up her mind what to say in reply, the door opened, and the three members of the privy council, entering the room hat in hand, bowed low at the threshold, and expressed a hope that the Herr Amman and the Frau Amman found themselves in good health.

The amman returned the greeting, pointed with his pipe to a capacious settle hard by his own chair, and nodded to his wife, who thereupon opening a door (there being no bells in the Lenkerhorn establishment), called out in a tone of command: "Gretchen, das bier."

In a few minutes a brown-faced serving-maid appeared with four great tankards of beer, which she placed on an oaken table near the amman and his guests.

"Well," said the spendvogt, after each man had taken a long drink, and a few unimportant questions had been asked and answered, "it has turned out as you expected, Herr Amman—the Herr Pastor goes no more to Warden Konrad's."

"Ah, I thought that would stop him," answered Hans complacently. "We must not be having

Herr Schuster married to a rich wife. That would make him worse to manage than ever. I wish we had such a minister as him of Niederstein. He is a sensible man now, does not bother his flock with new-fangled notions, nor try to turn young peasants into conceited scholars. He thinks as I think, that a knowledge of milking and cattle-tending is all the learning they require, or that is likely to do them any good."

"That is true, Herr Amman," put in Writer Jos; "but folks are so stupid. It is always the pastor this and the pastor that now in our gemeinde. He is nearly as much thought of and looked up to as you are yourself, Herr Amman, shame that it is to say so. Even some of the fellows he openly reproves from the pulpit speak well of him, because, forsooth, he takes so much trouble about things, and schools and catechises the children so diligently. And then he is so absurdly civil to the women. They swear by him."

"Why don't you send him to the right about?" growled the alpvogt; "your blessed Herr father would have done, and that right quickly."

"So he would. You are quite right, Herr

Alpvogt. But we, unfortunately, live in different times, and must use different means. The pastor is popular, so popular that if we were to propose his dismissal we might not be able to carry our proposal, and that would be a serious blow to our influence. It is better to wait than to fail. Rede should go before deed. Time brings opportunity, and I am disposed to think that, before our pastor's pupils begin to vote and multiply, he will be reprimanding and reproving without respect for persons in some other church than ours. As our neighbours over the mountains say: *Chi vivera vedera.*"

"That is right," said the spendvogt, "what the Herr Amman says is quite true, nothing could be truer; and, old as some of us are, I think we shall all live to see that meddlesome parson sent away faster than he came, and not on horseback either."

"It is all the fault of those pestilent newspapers," interposed the alpvogt, who being the senior, was naturally the most conservative, member of the council. "Why, in your Herr father's time, Herr Amman, nobody in the gemeinde, save himself and the Herr Pastor, ever thought of looking at a paper, and now Bernard the brieftraeger, as

he was telling me only the other day, actually brings into the gemeinde every week no fewer than six. No wonder people's minds are unsettled, and they do not submit as they used to do to the authority of their betters."

"Well put, Herr Alpvogt," rejoined Hans; "people's minds are unsettled, and it is all this nonsense about reading and writing that is doing the mischief. What business have a lot of peasants with newspapers and books, I should like to know? But what cannot be cured must be endured. There must be no open opposition to the pastor, mind—yet. We cannot swim against the stream. When we hear him praised we must praise him too; only you can just shake your heads, say something about a new broom sweeping clean, and that you hope it may last. Like all young men, Herr Schuster has more zeal than discretion. One of these days he will be going a little too far—there are signs of it already—and then—— But, you understand, I think."

Jos the writer said they understood perfectly, and would faithfully follow the Herr Amman's instructions; and after the tankards had been once more filled and emptied the council separated.

CHAPTER IV.

A RARE FLOWER.

THE Frau Amman was mistaken in supposing that the pastor had fallen in love with the warden's daughter, or that he had designs on her fortune. He certainly admired the buxom Klara, as did most people, for she was a handsome girl, with gentle manners, and it is quite possible that, with time and opportunity, admiration might have developed into a warmer feeling. But Herr Schuster's visits were paid as much to the mother—who was in delicate health—as to the daughter, and when he perceived, from Herr and Frau Konrad's manner, that his calls had ceased to be welcome, he promptly discontinued them.

"You no longer go to the Herr Warden's?" said Fritz the vorsteher to him one day.

"No; they did not seem to want me, and I do not like going where I am not made welcome."

"Can you guess why they don't want you?" asked the other.

The vorsteher, be it observed, was one of the pastor's best friends, and no great admirer of Hans Lenkerhorn and his privy council.

"I suppose they have taken a dislike to me," answered Schuster; "it may be that I have unwittingly offended the Herr Warden."

"No, Herr Pastor, I don't think that is it at all," said the vorsteher drily; "unless I am much mistaken, it is our noble amman's doing."

"But how—why?" exclaimed Schuster, "I don't understand——"

"It is very easy to understand though. The amman feared you might be finding favour in the eyes of the buxom Klara. Klara has a fortune, you know. If you married her, you would have comfortable money, and our amman does not want anybody to be rich but himself—above all a pastor who is already more popular than he likes."

"Surely, Fritz, you do the amman wrong. He has always shown himself very friendly."

"It is all show, though. The amman is a very

crafty gentleman, and no friend of yours, Herr Pastor. He will do you an ill turn if he can, as I well know. I have it from a sure source. But never mind, Herr Pastor, you have made yourself many friends in the gemeinde. They will stand by you, and if our king does not mind what he is doing, his reign will be shorter than he looks for."

A few days after this conversation Herr Schuster set out on a long mountain journey. Botanising was his hobby, and in spring and summer he spent most of his leisure in the collection and arrangement of plants and flowers. He had hitherto rarely extended his walks beyond the confines of the confederate communes. This time he was about to go farther. He meant to cross by the Blitzenspitze into the valley of the Wildwater, an affluent of the Rhine, where he hoped to find a rare flower, with which he had long desired to enrich his collection.

After walking several hours the pastor reached one of the lower spurs of the Blitzen, the highest point of which—a slender-seeming shaft of rock, black as night—rose high above the snow-line. His way lay, not over the summit—which was a virgin peak—but by a zigzag path, that wound

now through a patch of pine-wood, now by the side of a glacier-fed torrent, now over a field of snow, towards the pass that gives access to the valley of the Wildwater. The weather was superb, and the mountains, which still retained much of their winter livery, were more gloriously beautiful than on the brightest of summer days. The meadows and pastures, from which the snow had only lately receded, were lustrous with verdure and gay with wild-flowers. The trees were silvered with hoar-frost, and one glittering crest, white with the snow of a thousand winters, rose above another as far as the eye could reach.

So enchanted was Schuster with the scene around him, and he lingered so long on the way, that it was high noon before he gained the Blitzen pass. After taking off the edge of his appetite with some cheese and bread he had put in his pocket before starting, and slaking his thirst by swallowing a mouthful of snow, he began his descent towards the valley of the Wildwater, where he hoped to find the rare flower, of which he was in search. He had not gone far when he heard the musical tinkling of cattle-bells, and on doubling a promontory of rock, found himself in a

verdant pasture, shut in between beetling cliffs, and peopled by a herd of beautiful cows, tended by two gentle watchers. For albeit one of them, as is the custom with alpine shepherdesses when tending their flocks, was clad in male attire, there was a display of ribbons about her neck, and a coquetry in the set of her hat, that would have betrayed her sex, even if it had not been announced by her occupation—for the damsel was knitting a stocking. Her companion wore the costume of the country—a gaily-striped skirt, reaching barely to the ankle, black bodice, with white wide sleeves, extending no farther than the elbow, and an arrangement of muslin wound round the head, almost after the fashion of a turban. Her cheeks were like the petals of the wild rose, her eyes as blue as a forget-me-not, her teeth as white as fresh-fallen snow, and her tresses as dark as the rocks of the Blitzen.

"*Guten Tag, Fraulein,*" said the parson, after a short pause of surprise, stepping briskly forward and politely doffing his hat.

"Good-day, Herr Pastor," returned the young lady in the striped petticoat.

"Herr Pastor!" exclaimed Schuster wonderingly, for there was nothing—just then, at least—

clerical in his appearance. He had no long-skirted black coat dangling, petticoat fashion, about his legs; no foolish little dog-collar encircled his neck; no hat of ecclesiastical cut covered his head; he was dressed like a mountaineer, and—save that his build was somewhat spare and his cheek rather pale—looked like one. "Pray tell me, my little lady (mein Fraulein), why you think I am a minister."

"Because I have seen you in the pulpit and heard you preach," answered the maiden promptly.

"But—but I don't remember ever to have seen you before, and yours is a face not easily forgotten." (Here the pastor examined the girl's features so critically that she blushed and looked in another direction.) "You surely do not belong to my flock?"

"Oh no, Herr Pastor. My father and I walked over the mountains to hear you preach your first sermon. That is the only time I was ever at Oberstein."

"Oh, that explains it. I don't think I saw anybody that Sunday—only a crowd of faces."

"You preached a very good sermon, though. My father said he never heard a better. If Ober-

stein were not so far off, we should come to hear you often."

Here the pastor doffed his hat a second time, and inquired whose ministrations the young lady was in the habit of attending.

"Herr Braunhosen is our pastor," she answered; "but he is getting into years, poor old man! and mumbles so in his talk that nobody can make out what he means."

"Herr Braunhosen is pastor of——"

"Regels."

"Regels, in the valley of the Wildwater! Why, that is where I am going. I want to find a rare flower that grows only on that side of the mountain."

"You are fond of flowers, then?"

"Very. I go about gathering them all the summer."

"So am I. I should like you to see my garden at Regels. Who knows? perhaps you might find in it the flower you want. If you like, I will show you the way; it is not very easy to find—at least the short cut is not—for strangers."

"You are very friendly, mein Fraulein. I thank you heartily. I shall be very glad to be shown the way, if it be not too much trouble."

"Trouble, oh no! I am going to Regels myself. I don't live up here and lodge in the hut there, as Klaerchen does. This is my father's alp, and these are my father's cows, and I have only come to see them and spend an hour with Klaerchen. I daresay we shall find my father with the woodcutters in the Feenwald. He will be glad to make your acquaintance. But won't you have a drink of milk before we set out? We cannot offer you anything stronger."

Schuster declared that, of all things in the world, he would like a drink of milk; whereupon Klaerchen was ordered to fetch a jugful from the hut; and her mistress poured out a glass for the pastor and gave it him with her own dainty hand. He found it a decided improvement on the snow he had just swallowed.

"Ade, Klaerchen," said the young lady, as she turned towards the valley, "I shall come to see you again one of these days."

"Ade, Fraulein Valeria," said the shepherdess, making a curtsey, which, in her undraped condition had so droll an effect, that her mistress broke into a merry laugh, and the pastor, despite his desire to be proper and polite, could not

repress a smile; whereupon poor Klaerchen blushed violently and hid herself behind a big boulder.

"So Valeria is your name," observed the pastor. "You must come of a Romansch or Italian stock."

"I am called Valeria Schnewitchen, and my father is Hauptmann (captain) Schnewitchen," said the maiden, who was frankness itself, and unsophisticated to a fault. And then she went on to tell Schuster all about herself, her family, and the people of Regels. Her father, she said, had been a soldier of fortune. While still very young he made the campaign of Moscow. He had served in the army of Holland, in the Swiss guard of Louis XVIII., and had held a commission in one of the Swiss regiments of the king of Naples. He was married in Italy to a lady who died on the very day Valeria was born. A few years after his wife's death, Captain Schnewitchen retired from the Neapolitan service, settled with his daughter in his native gemeinde, and was now the largest landowner in Regels and an officer in the cantonal militia.

As Valeria concluded this story, which was told at some length and with many digressions,

they reached a hollow in the mountain filled with snow, that, owing to its northern exposure and the shadow cast by a high wall of rock, had only just begun to melt.

"This is our nearest way," said Valeria, "right over the snow. Are you good at crossing snow?"

"Of course I am," replied Schuster, with a smile. "Nobody can well live in Graubünden, or pass two winters in Oberstein, without becoming an adept in snow-walking."

"That is good. But a slip on a road, or an ordinary mountain-path, is nothing; on this Bergrücken it might be fatal. Down there" (pointing to the extremity of the slope) "is the Schwartzer Abgrund (black precipice), it is more than a thousand feet deep. The snow, too, is treacherous just now; soft on the surface and hard and slippery underneath. You must be very careful. Plant every footstep firmly, and keep a fast grip of your alpenstock. I will go first, please—I must—I know the way, and you do not. The snow is melting to-day. See, the track we made this morning—Andreas, the ziegenhirt, and I—has nearly disappeared."

The ridge was very steep, so steep that Valeria had often to pause and stamp steps with her feet before going farther. The snow descended almost sheer to the edge of the precipice. The pastor followed his fair leader closely and cautiously, now and then exchanging a word with her.

They had won about half the distance towards the further edge of the *arrêt* and were beginning to descend—for they had to pursue a zigzag course—when Schuster was startled by a sudden exclamation from Valeria.

"Ach! the dear father is coming to meet me. How good he is! He feared I should not be able to cross the Bergrücken alone—as if I did not know the way as well as he!"

"Oh God in heaven, the Herr Pastor has gone! He will fall over the Abgrund and be killed. Father, father, save him—save the Herr Pastor! That is a good father; run, run, you will reach the bottom of the Bergrücken before him."

It was quite true. Schuster, who had been listening to Valeria and looking at her father, instead of minding his footing, had made a false step, and was now shooting down the snow-slope with the velocity of an avalanche. In vain he dug

his hands, and tried to plant his heels in the snow; it melted in his grasp like water; he went round and round like a teetotum, and every second brought him nearer to the edge of the terrible Schwartzer Abgrund.

He had abandoned hope, and was trying to think a hurried prayer, when he felt himself caught by the collar, and a firm hand raised him to his feet.

"It is well I was here, Meinherr," said his rescuer, "or you would have been somewhere else."

The pastor, who was too breathless and too much overcome by emotion to speak, could only for the moment look the thanks he would fain have uttered.

Hauptmann Schnewitchen had a red brown face, scarred in two places with sword-cuts, heavy grizzled moustaches, broad shoulders, and long limbs. Though he had passed his sixtieth year the captain was still an active mountaineer, and renowned for his prowess as a hunter of the chamois and the bear. When he heard his daughter's cry he did not attempt to overtake Schuster—the attempt would have been useless—but by running diagonally down the *arrêt* he gained the edge of the

precipice in time to intercept him, and so literally plucked the pastor from the jaws of death.

"Come this way," said Schnewitchen, when the minister had recovered his breath, "we will mount the rocks on this side and join my daughter up there."

Schuster gave a nod of assent. He was still too full to speak.

They found Valeria standing near the edge of the *arrêt*, looking very pale and agitated.

"Who is this gentleman?" asked the hauptmann in Italian, when he had come within speaking distance of his daughter.

"What! Don't you recognise him, father? He is the Herr Pastor of Oberstein."

"Who under providence owes his life to you," said Schuster, in the same language, as he doffed his hat and saluted Herr Schnewitchen.

"I am delighted to make your acquaintance," replied the captain, as he returned the salute. "Tut, tut, Meinherr, you are not the first man who has slipped on a Bergrücken and been helped to his feet by a friendly hand. You would have done the same to me. Let us say no more about it."

"He is going into the valley, father, to look for a rare flower."

"I see. The Herr Pastor is a botanist. I hope he will find what he wants. But he must first *vorlieb nehmen* (take pot-luck) with us at Regels. I had good luck fishing this morning. You shall taste our trout, and I have some complitir in my cellar that would not disgrace the White Cross at Quera. We will crack a bottle of it, you and I."

The pastor did not refuse the invitation, and an hour's easy walking, for it was all downhill, brought them to their destination. Though Regels lies in a valley overshadowed by great mountains, it is nearly four thousand feet above sea-level—a village of neat brown chalets, farm buildings of antique pattern, two or three substantial houses of white stone, with a quaint church, whose copper-covered spire gleams in the brilliant sunshine like burnished gold. Regels is surrounded by meadows and orchards, and the Wildwater, white with "glacier milk," eddies swiftly past it towards the Rhine. Most of the inhabitants are of Romansch origin, and speak the *lingua Romanscha*; but several German-Swiss families have long been settled in

the valley, and nearly all understand German, which is fast superseding the Latin dialects of the Engadines and the Vorder Rhein.

In one of Regel's white houses lived Hauptmann Schnewitchen and his daughter Valeria. The house was roomy, and the rooms were spacious and lofty. It had been built after the hauptmann's own design, and in bright sunny weather suggested, as he doubtless wished it to do, reminiscences of the sunny south. A broad verandah in full view of the Blitzenspitze and the Wildwater overlooked a charming garden, the cultivation of which was Valeria's favourite pastime. In this verandah the parson was regaled with a luxurious repast. The trout were supplemented with other good things, and Schnewitchen—who rarely had an intelligent listener—as they discussed the bottle of complitir, fought his battles over again, and talked much and pleasantly about the countries he had visited, and the stirring events in which he had taken part. Valeria played several airs on the piano, and sang a Romansch song. As for Schuster, he found the company of his new friends so agreeable that he forgot all about his botanising, and when he rose to take his leave, the *alpen glühen* was

playing over the glacier-crowned summit of the Gallinario.

The hauptmann insisted on accompanying his guest as far as the Blitzen pass. Before they parted he pressed the minister to pay them another visit.

"Come as often as you can, Herr Pastor," said the old soldier. "You may always count on a warm welcome and good cheer. The walk is long, I know, but it will stretch your legs and improve your wind. And as for plants, you will find as many as you want on the sunny side of the Blitzen, and down here in the valley."

On this hint the pastor acted. Whatever direction he took at starting, his botanising excursions generally ended at Regels. Something seemed to drag him thither. More that once he found Valeria keeping Klaerchen company in the old place, and walked with her to the village, where he always met with the warm welcome which the captain had promised him. There were good reasons why his visits should be agreeable both to the father and daughter. For Schuster, albeit a poor Swiss parson, was a scholar and a gentleman; and though he was not a travelled

man like the hauptmann, he knew many things of which the hauptmann was ignorant, even in the latter's own line.

As for Valeria, she looked up to the Herr Pastor as a being of a superior order, and was lost in astonishment at the variety and profundity of his learning. He helped her with her garden; told her many surprising things touching the nature and habits of plants; was thoroughly conversant with the history of Free Old Rhætia, and could go on talking for hours about the Three Rhætian Leagues, the Gray League (whence Graubünden), the League of God's House, and the League of the Ten Jurisdictions—subjects in which Valeria took the greatest delight.

All this time the parson was worshipping Valeria in secret, not daring to hint his love, for fear he might be forbidden her father's house. He was too poor, he thought, to be accepted as the suitor of the wealthy hauptmann's daughter.

Nobody at Oberstein knew of Schuster's visits to Regels, and of his friendship with the Schnewitchens. It was the busy season. All the young people were watching the cattle in the mountains, all the men were busy on the land. Seed had to

be sown, crops harvested, wood fetched from the forest. The women, too, had to work, and none had time to take note of the Herr Pastor's comings and goings. He remembered the warning of Fritz the vorsteher, and kept his own counsel; and his passion for botanising was a sufficient excuse for frequent absences and long excursions.

And so things went on, until the herald snow of another winter whitened the slopes of the Blitzen and the Gallinario, boding the approach of hard weather, and warning the herds on the mountains to lead their flocks to the valleys.

On a morning in the latter half of September, the pastor once more wended his way by the well-known path towards the vale of the Wildwater. The air was keen and the sky nebulous, the pools by the wayside were coated with ice, and the trees white with hoar-frost. Every sign denoted that this might be the last visit he could make to Regels for many months, and his heart was heavy within him. On the alp below the pass he found, as he had expected, Valeria and Klaerchen. Valeria wore furs, and Klaerchen had added to the oddity of her appearance by throwing over her shoulders an old sack. With the help of several boys and

girls she was getting her cows and goats together, preparatory to driving them down the mountain, and the hills all round were alive with the tinkling of bells, the low of kine, and the merry yoedelling of their keepers.

"*Guten Tag*, Herr Pastor," said Valeria, extending her hand; "are you to come to help Klaerchen to take the cows home?"

"Certainly, mein Fraulein, if you ask it," answered Schuster briskly; for the moment he set eyes on Miss Schnewitchen his spirits seemed to revive. "Shall I help you, Klaerchen?"

"*Ich danke, nein*," returned the hirtine, with a laugh. "What do Herr Pastors know about cows and goats? Why, you would be driving them over the Schwartzer Abgrund, and what would the Herr Hauptmann say then? You keep Fraulein Valeria company. You like that better than following at the tail of a flock of cows, I know right well—*dass weiss ich ganz gut.*"

This sally made Valeria blush and the parson look slightly foolish, and they walked on silently in the wake of Klaerchen and her flocks and herds. Whether by accident or design, they let the drove get a long way before them, and as

they entered the Feenwald at one end the tail of the last cow disappeared at the other. The silence by this time was beginning to be oppressive, the more especially as each was thinking about the other.

"That is a very nice cow," said the pastor, by way of breaking the ice—and the silence.

"Very," said Valeria absently; "and so kind and learned."

"A kind and learned cow!" exclaimed the bewildered Schuster. "But, liebes Fraulein, how can a cow be kind and learned? I never——"

"I meant—that is, I did not mean—I mean that I was not paying attention to what you said; I was thinking about something else," stammered Valeria.

"And I was thinking about something else too, Fraulein."

"Yes, Herr Pastor?"

"I was thinking how many weary months must go by before the pass is free from snow—for there will be a downfall to-night or to-morrow—and I can come to Regels again."

"But there is the road; why cannot you take a sledge and come by the road?" said Valeria, with an alarmed look.

"For several reasons. I have neither horse nor sledge; the new schoolmaster has not come—there is no telling when he will come—and until he does I shall have no time for visiting; and there is another reason."

"What is the other reason, Herr Pastor?"

"People would talk. They would say I had an object: they would perhaps say that I went to Regels to see you."

"Is there anything wrong in coming to see us, Herr Pastor?"

"But don't you see, Fraulein, they might say that I went to visit you; they might say that—that—I love you?"

"And don't you, Herr Pastor?" asked Valeria, regarding him calmly with her forget-me-not eyes. "Is it not our duty to love each other?"

"It is, and I hope I love my fellow-men; but you, Valeria," exclaimed Schuster passionately, "I love more than all the world; and if I dared—if I were not so poor—I would ask you to be my wife."

"But I know so little," murmured the girl, "and you are so learned."

"Then you do—you do love me?" said the pastor joyfully, taking both her hands in his.

"Yes, Herr Pastor, I do love you," returned Valeria, looking at him steadfastly, though her voice trembled and a bright blush mantled her cheek. "But I am so ignorant and you are so learned."

"But you are good, my Valeria, and goodness is far before learning," said the pastor, as he timidly and almost reverently touched with his lips the girl's pure forehead. Your innocence is better than my knowledge, and your love is a blessing of which I am not worthy. But what will your father say? I am afraid he will be very angry."

"If he is angry with you he will be angry with me, and that is impossible; he has never been angry with me in all my life."

This argument, though encouraging as far as it went, did not seem to the pastor absolutely conclusive, and he informed the hauptmann of what had come to pass with considerable misgiving as to the manner in which his confession would be received. But he might have spared his anxiety. Captain Schnewitchen showed neither anger nor surprise.

"Valeria is the only kin I have," he said, "and what makes for her happiness makes for mine.

God knows I don't want to part with the child, but we must part some time, and I'd like to see her comfortably settled before my name is taken off the muster-roll. I think you are worthy of her, pastor, if any man can be worthy of so good a girl. As for your poverty, never mind that; you have youth and energy, and all I have is Valeria's."

So Schuster went on his homeward way rejoicing: and though, as he descended the Blitzen towards Oberstein, the clouds gathered overhead, and the air was thick with fast-falling snow, he heeded it not, thinking only of the fair flower he had found in the vale of the Wildwater, and of the bright future before him.

CHAPTER V.

VICTORY AND DEFEAT.

WHEN the amman heard of the pastor's betrothal to Valeria Schnewitchen he was more put about than his wife had known him to be for a long time.

"Thunder and lightning!" he exclaimed. "I had better have let him marry the buxom Klara. That Schnewitchen is rich, and can give his daughter no end of a *mitgift*."

"Cannot you stop it?" asked the Frau Amman.

"How can I stop it? Are they not betrothed? Schuster will be more popular than ever now. Well, we must just swim with the stream. Time brings opportunity. I daresay we shall catch him tripping one of these days."

The next time Hans met Schuster he congratulated him on his good fortune, and wished

him every happiness; and the Frau Amman said she had heard that Fraulein Schnewitchen was as good as she was handsome, and would have a fine *mitgift*, and that the Herr Pastor was a very lucky man—a sentiment in which the Herr Pastor fully concurred.

It was not long before the amman had another cause for disquietude, and another reason for fearing and hating the pastor. One of the old customs of Oberstein was a sort of *corvée*. At certain times of the year all the people of the commune were constrained to turn out—either in person or deputy—to mend the communal roads, to the great profit of the large proprietors, who in this way got the roads leading to their mountain pastures kept in order by the unpaid labour of the poorer members of the gemeinde. Though the custom had not the sanction of law, and those upon whom the burden fell resented it in secret, nobody had yet ventured to resist it openly. But the pastor, emboldened by his love, and encouraged by the thought that his marriage with Valeria would make him independent both of the amman and the commune, resolved on the first opportunity to denounce the custom, and, if possible, deliver his humbler parishioners from the yoke imposed on

them by those whom they regarded as their betters.

The opportunity soon came. One day when he was out for a walk, Schuster found a number of people busy mending a road, that was in no sense a public road. It led no whither but to the amman's mountain pastures, and was used exclusively by his cattle and servants. Among the workers Schuster perceived a poor widow, whose sole possession was a couple of goats, and who, as he well knew, had a hard struggle to make both ends meet.

"I think you might have been spared this task, Trina," he said, pausing in his walk.

"It is an old custom," answered the woman, wiping the sweat from her brow; "but it is not right."

"True, Trina. Prescription is no justification for oppression. But why do you and these others" (several of whom were listening to the conversation) "submit to this oppression? The law does not compel you to give your labour—why then do you give it?"

"I don't know," muttered Trina, shaking her head dubiously. "It's an old custom; the amman

is a great man, and there is no telling what he might do."

"The amman cannot harm you," said Schuster calmly.

"The Herr Pastor is quite right," said a young fellow, who was leaning listening on his spade. "I am tired of working for nothing, and I shall go, let stay who will."

And shouldering his spade he marched off. In a few minutes he was followed by all the others, and the last survival of feudalism was abolished once and for all in the commune of Oberstein.

When the amman heard of this incident he was terribly annoyed, and uttered curses, not loud but deep, for he was touched both in his dignity and his pocket.

"I will teach this meddlesome parson to stick to his last," he exclaimed furiously. "What business has he to interfere with things that concern him not?"

This was what Hans said in the bosom of his family and the secrecy of his council. When he met the minister he always spoke him fair; and he took frequent occasion to commend openly his devotion and zeal.

Shortly after his marriage, which took place the following summer, the parson succeeded in effecting another reform, which, unfortunately, did not prove as permanent as his abolition of the *corvée*. He put down—for a while—the custom of fuddling at funerals. Ever since his arrival at Oberstein he had set his face against this custom. He was shocked when mourners appeared at a graveside in a state of brutal intoxication. By incessant remonstrance, by appeals from the pulpit, by personal entreaty, he had so far influenced public opinion that wine and schnapps were no longer dispensed in the chamber of death; yet the consumption of drink on these occasions was still excessive, and funerals often gave rise to scandalous scenes, both before and after interment.

At length the pastor, feeling himself, as he said, strong in the affection of his people, proposed that the gemeinde should suppress the practice by a local police regulation, a regulation which at that time they had full power to adopt. Now, however, the power no longer exists. The Federal Constitution of 1874 put an end to local option, and removed every check on the production and consumption of strong drink, with the consequence

that Switzerland is fast becoming—if it has not already become—the most drunken country in Europe.

The minister's proposal, as may be supposed, provoked much comment, and encountered a formidable opposition.

"Heaven's thunder!" said Alpvogt Christian to Spendvogt Michel, "what will the man want next? He will not be content until every one of our time-honoured customs is swept away. What says the Herr Amman?"

"The Herr Amman will not oppose the Herr Pastor," said the spendvogt, with a curious look. "For this he has good reasons, which you will perhaps learn from himself. Time brings opportunities, you know."

"So it does—for the parson," growled the alpvogt. "I wonder when our turn will come? If the Herr Amman's father had been alive he would have known better than to stand all this nonsense. But politics nowadays are getting beyond the comprehension of a plain old fellow like me. If this sort of thing goes on much longer there will be nothing for it but to retire from public life altogether."

The spendvogt was right. To the surprise of all, save those in the secret, Hans offered no opposition to Schuster's proposals. He frankly admitted that excessive drinking at funerals—or any other time—was not exactly a desirable thing; and though he feared the Herr Pastor's proposals went a little too far, he was entirely in the hands of the gemeinde; whatever measure his fellow-citizens thought it expedient to sanction he would frankly accept and strictly enforce.

After a speech from the pastor, the new regulation, forbidding drinking at funerals, and imposing further restrictions on the sale of drink, was adopted, though not by a very large majority.

The amman was as good as his word. He enforced the enactment with relentless severity. When complaints were made that he was too hard, he would answer that it was his duty to administer the law as he found it—a law for which, not he and his council, but the Herr Pastor and the majority of the gemeinde were responsible.

The consequences, which the astute potentate had foreseen from the first, were not long in manifesting themselves. Before the law was many months old a violent reaction set in against it, and

a party bitterly hostile to the pastor was formed in the gemeinde. The seven innkeepers of the confederate communes, all of whom were heavily hit by the parson's Muzzling Law—as the new regulation came to be called—with as many of their customers as they could influence, joined the ranks of Schuster's enemies. These again were reinforced by not a few weak-kneed friends of sobriety, who yearned for the fleshpots of Egypt—in other words, for the free fuddles that from time immemorial had been the invariable concomitants of funerals, and by all who thought old things better than new, and objected on principle to every sort of innovation. It was a contest between good and evil—and evil won.

When the amman gathered from the reports of his councillors, and his own observation, that the pastor's influence was on the wane, he perceived that the opportunity he had so long waited for had arrived, and he resolved to strike the grand blow for which he had so craftily prepared the way. An ordinary man would have been content to checkmate the parson by procuring the abolition of his Muzzling Law. But Hans Lenkerhorn was not an ordinary man. He determined not alone to

repeal the law, but to get rid of its author. Measures were taken accordingly. At the next yearly meeting of the confederate burghers there was an unusually strong muster of publicans and sinners; and Spendvogt Michel proposed, and Writer Jos seconded, a motion calling upon Pastor Schuster to give in his resignation. The pastor and his friends were taken by surprise, and after a hot debate, in which Fritz the vorsteher took a leading part, the motion was carried by a majority equal to that whereby fuddling at funerals (soon to be re-established) had been forbidden.

The pastor accepted his fate with resignation. The loss was not his. Valeria's fortune of twelve hundred gulden a-year (one hundred pounds) made him passing rich, and both he and she felt that he might find a more congenial sphere of duty than a parish ruled by an unscrupulous potentate, where his services had been so little appreciated and so ill requited.

When the pastor preached his last sermon, and bade his flock a loving farewell, there was hardly a dry eye in the church—especially among the women —who, if they might have had their way, would never

have suffered their revered minister to be ignominiously dismissed for a too faithful performance of his duty. The next day he went away, with deep sorrow in his heart—for he had made many dear friends in Oberstein—yet full of hope that God would not allow to perish the seed he had so painfully sown.

Thirty years afterwards Karl Schuster, now a university professor and an author of high repute, came again to Oberstein, as member of a Government Commission on education, and he greatly rejoiced to find that his hope had not been in vain.

The landamman slept by the side of Peter his father—none of Hans Lenkerhorn's sons having been found worthy to succeed him—and the first child baptised by the pastor reigned in the potentate's stead. The old wooden schoolhouse was replaced with a substantial stone building, in which the children of the gemeinde were taught by a trained teacher from Chur. Herr Schuster's successor gladdened him with the information that the custom of excessive drinking at funerals was falling into desuetude,

and he saw everywhere so many signs of improvement that he went away, for the second time and the last, with a thankful heart and full of hope for the future of the community in which he had spent the first eventful years of his ministry.

LUCKY SAM BRIGGS.

LUCKY SAM BRIGGS

CHAPTER I.

ON a fine morning in the month of June, 187—, Mr. and Mrs. Briggs sat down to breakfast in the *salle-à-manger* of the Hôtel de la Paix at Geneva. Being early, and having a choice of places, they had taken a small table—at the suggestion of the head-waiter—in a part of the room which commanded a view of the lake, the Rhone, and the Alps. A northerly wind, fresh but not too sharp, had dispersed the fog that shortly after daybreak had somewhat obscured the prospect, and the mighty Mont Blanc, lighted up by an unclouded sun, was showing himself in all the fulness of his splendid proportions—white, dazzling, and majestic.

"Yon's Mount Blank, waiter, isn't it?" asked Mr. Briggs, pointing his finger in that direction.

"Yes, sir, that's Mon Blon," answered the waiter, as he bustled off to fetch Mr. and Mrs. Briggs their *café-au-lait*.

"Isn't it grand?" observed Mrs. Briggs enthusiastically. "It just looks as if it were med of blank mange" (by which the lady probably meant *blanc-manger*).

"Well, I was thinking it looked uncommon like a mountain of fresh-deviled cotton. By gum, it would be worth some brass if it wor!"

"Wouldn't they stare at it in Bolton?" remarked Mrs. Briggs, disdaining to notice her husband's last remark, which she deemed rather coarse.

"Ay, and they'd see it too, if it were clapped atop of Rivington Pike. And look there, what a lot of good water's running all to waste. It would keep some bleach crofts going, yon would."

At this moment the waiter returned with the coffee.

"Is this all as you're going to bring us?" asked Mr. Briggs, with a dissatisfied air, as he surveyed the table, on which there were placed, besides the coffee and milk-jugs, a few rolls of bread, two pats of butter, and a small jar of honey. "Th' bread looks very nice, but I'd like summut a bit solider."

"We generally serve only *café-au-lait*, or tea and bread, for first breakfast; but if monsieur would like some meat or eggs, or an omelette, they can be prepared in a few minutes."

"Well, what shall it be, Mary Ann?" said Mr. Briggs, appealing, as gentlemen are wont to do in such circumstances, to his better-half.

"Whatever you like, Sam, I'm not pertickler."

"Well, then," observed Mr. Briggs, true to his British instincts, "we'll have beefsteaks. Waiter, bring two beefsteaks."

"Yes, sir; anything else, sir?" answered the waiter, who had served part of his apprenticeship in London.

"No, I think that'll be all. Stay, you may bring us a few potatoes, if you have any ready. And look here, waiter—has owt been heard o' my portmantle?"

"No, sir. You can hardly expect an answer yet, sir. It was only last night that Mr. Trinkmann telegraphed to Paris."

And the waiter went off at a run to order the beefsteaks and potatoes.

"If I may tell you what I think about th' portmantle," observed Mrs. Briggs, in a tone of

reproach, "you'll never see it again. I never knew such a thing as to tak' it to th' wrong office i' that way."

"Oh, we'll get it reet enough, you'll see. I always was lucky about them things. I never lose owt. And if I did tak' it to th' wrong shop—what then? Hasn't many a one done th' same?"

"Why didn't you ask?"

"I dar'say! It is all very fine asking when you cannot talk. But you have no call to worrit, Mary Ann; th' portmantle 'll be heard on afore the day's o'er, tak' my word for it. We got that shawl as you lost i' Lundon, and when I left my topcoat i' that cab i' Paris, didn't th' driver bring it back th' day after? I always was lucky, and never more so than when I wed thee, my lass."

Mrs. Briggs, appeased by this gallant speech, smiled graciously, and poured out for her husband a cup of coffee.

They were more than halfway through with their beefsteaks and *pommes sautées*, which Mr. Briggs declared to be "tip-top, and no mistake," when the indefatigable waiter, with a look of importance, placed on the table a yellow envelope.

"Behold a despatch for monsieur," he said.

"Didn't I tell you?" observed Mr. Briggs triumphantly to his wife, as he laid down his knife and fork and broke open the seal. "It's about that portmantle."

But it was not "about that portmantle," and, as Mr. Briggs read, his ruddy countenance turned deadly pale, his lips trembled, and beads of perspiration started on his brow.

"What is it, what is it, Sam?" exclaimed Mrs. Briggs, turning also pale; for she could see that the missive contained evil tidings.

"Oh Mary Ann, it's about Betsy—she's took ill!—she's very bad. What shall we do?—we mun go home at once."

"Let me see, let me see," said Mrs. Briggs excitedly, snatching the telegram from her husband's shaking hands.

A tear trickled down her cheek as she hastily ran her eye over the ill-omened message; for Betsy, whom a few days before she had left at Bolton healthy and happy, was the youngest of her children, the flower and favourite of her flock. Hardly able to believe her own eyes, she read it a second time slowly and painfully, dwelling

on every syllable, and almost spelling every word. As she read on, her look of sorrow changed into one of bewilderment, then of indignation; and, throwing the unlucky paper angrily on the table, she exclaimed, with a withering look at her husband:

"Why, it isn't for us at all, man, and it isn't Betsy as is ill, it's Bates; look here. And it's from somebody called Jones, and we know no Jones. Where's th' henvelope?"

Mrs. Briggs was quite right. The telegram was signed "Jones," and the name mentioned in it was "Bates," though the "s" being written with a long tail, as is customary with continental writers, it did not look unlike "Betsy." Mr. Briggs picked up the envelope, which he had thrown on the floor. A more careful scrutiny showed that it was addressed to Monsieur Riggs, a name that, in the hurry of the moment, he might easily have mistaken for his own. He had, therefore, every excuse for opening the envelope; but his wife was very indignant that she should have been made the victim of his blunder in confounding "Bates" with their Betsy, and she expressed her sense of his stupidity in language

more forcible than elegant. She had never had such a turn in all her life before, she said. If you had touched her with a feather she was that "took" that she would have fallen off her chair. What could he think, she demanded, to read the thing that careless as not to see it came from somebody of the name of Jones, and what had he learned to write for if he could not tell the difference between "Bates" and "Betsy"?

Mr. Briggs, thus objurgated, had very little to say for himself, so he turned to vent his wrath on the waiter, who had caused all the trouble by bringing him a message clearly meant for somebody else.

Just then his eye was caught by the figure of Monsieur Trinkmann, the proprietor of the hotel, who was coming towards them with another yellow envelope in his hand.

"What's up now?" said Mr. Briggs, in a puzzled voice. "I'll be hanged if there isn't another of them things."

"I'm afraid there has been some mistake about a telegram, Mr. Briggs," said the landlord, who spoke passable English, and was particularly attentive to his guests. "We have a Mr. Riggs staying

here, and he seems to have got a message meant for you, while you may possibly have got the one meant for him."

"Is this it?" asked the other, exhibiting the telegram he had opened.

"Monsieur Riggs; yes, this is it; and this one, I believe, is for you."

"It seems to be," observed Briggs dubiously, carefully scanning the address before opening the envelope. "Here, stop a minute," he called out to M. Trinkmann, who was making, off with the other message. "This is a darned thing in French as I cannot read a word of. Would you be good enough——?"

"Certainly, with pleasure. It's from the *chef de gare* (the station-master) at Paris, to say that your portmanteau has been found and will be sent off by the express to-night. You may expect it here by eleven o'clock to-morrow morning."

"Thank you kindly, sir. What a fine thing it is to understand two or three languages as you do, Monsieur Trinkmann; I wish I could. And now, Mary Ann, what do you think now? Didn't I tell you as the portmantle would turn up all right? I always was lucky, and nobody can deny it neither."

"Ay, more luckier than clever," answered the lady sharply, for she was far from having recovered from the shock of her husband's untoward announcement.

Briggs, not being prepared with an immediate answer to this home-thrust, and thinking, probably, a change of subject desirable, hinted that it was about time they were taking their contemplated drive in the direction of Ferney, and intimated that if Mrs. B. would go upstairs and "put on her things," he would go and order a carriage.

While this is being done, and our hero and heroine are on their way to Ferney, it may, perhaps, please the reader to be informed who they are and whence they come. Mr. Briggs, known to his familiars as "Sam Briggs," is a retired cotton-waste dealer from Bolton, of some five-and-fifty years old, stout, broad built, and with a ruddy good-humoured face. His hair and mutton-chop whiskers are white, and he sports a white hat, which he is fond of wearing slightly on one side. His origin is of the humblest, and he owes his success in life entirely to his own industry and thrift, though, as regards thrift, he has been admirably seconded by his wife. But Sam Briggs

is enterprising as well as industrious. By dint of judicious buying and selling during the American war he made a considerable fortune, and, what is far more remarkable, he managed to keep it.

Shortly before his appearance at the Hôtel de la Paix he had retired from business in favour of his two sons. One of the first uses he made of his liberty was to pay a visit to the Continent, which he had long had a desire to see; for, though rather rough of speech and somewhat unrefined in manner, Mr. Briggs was by no means devoid of intelligence, and people who tried to take advantage of his seeming simplicity, generally got the worst of the bargain; moreover, as he himself said, he was often greatly befriended by luck. Besides Betsy, whom they had left in charge of their house at Bolton, Mr. and Mrs. Briggs had a married daughter—wife of a cotton-spinner—who regularly every year presented them with a grandchild; and, as their elder son was also married and the father of a numerous progeny, there was little probability of the race of Briggs dying out, or of the head of the family being under the painful necessity of leaving his fortune to the Bolton Infirmary.

CHAPTER II.

OUR travellers were highly delighted with their drive to Ferney and Gex, and along the foot of the Jura, by Divonne and Coppet, back to Geneva. They returned to their hotel at six o'clock, with ravenous appetites, and did full justice to the excellent dinner provided for them by mine host of the inn.

When the meal was over they seated themselves in the corridor of the hotel, and listened to the strains of a magnificent musical-box, provided by the landlord for the delectation of his guests; while Mr. Briggs regaled himself with an excellent cigar, which he enjoyed all the more that he had bought it at the astonishingly low price of three halfpence.

The sight around them was novel and interest-

ing. Visitors were walking, singly and in groups, about the corridor; some were sitting at little tables sipping coffee, others were playing bagatelle; people were coming and going; gaily-dressed ladies were promenading with knickerbockered gentlemen; through the swinging-doors could be seen skiffs shooting about on the river; steamers were coming and going, and the huge mass of the Rhone, swollen by the melting of Alpine snows, rushed arrow-like under the Pont du Mont Blanc, and eddied past Rousseau's isle in the soft light of the setting sun.

Mr. Briggs was contemplating this varied scene with serene satisfaction, when he suddenly received a dig in the ribs that almost made him swallow all that remained of his three-halfpenny cigar; and the partner of his life, with a look of horror, directed his attention to a small table near them, whereat were seated two ladies.

One of the ladies was middle-aged, and wore garments of sober hue; the other was young, fair, and fashionably, almost flashily, attired. At the moment Mr. Briggs set eyes on them the soberly-dressed one had just handed to her companion a lighted match, which the younger lady was in the

act of applying to a long cigarette, delicately poised between a pair of lovely lips.

"I never saw such a thing in all my life, Sam," whispered Mrs. B. to her spouse—never; she's no better than she should be, I'm sure she isn't. I thought you said this was a respectable house?"

"And so it is, one of th' respectablest in Geneva."

"Nonsense! How can it be when such as them's here?"

It should be remarked that Mrs. Briggs was a strict chapel-goer, and plumed herself on the extreme correctness of her moral principles.

"Well, it is raythe stiff for a young woman to be smoking in hothells i' that way. I'll ask th' landlord if he thinks it's a right thing to do."

No sooner said than done. Beckoning to M. Trinkmann, who was close by, Mr. Briggs asked him if he received ladies into his house who carried on "i' that way."

"How?" said the landlord, not seeming clearly to understand.

"That there lady as is smoking, what——"

"You want to know who she is? That's the Princess Vera Blatchemkoff, daughter of the

Russian prime minister; the other is her lady in waiting."

"Goodness gracious!" exclaimed Mrs. Briggs; "and do you mean to say as Prince Blackemoff—him as I've seen his name in th' papers—lets his daughter smoke?"

"Certainly; Russian ladies nearly all smoke. The Princess Vera is a very amiable young lady, I believe."

"Well, I never! I couldn't have believed it if I had not seen seen it. (*Aside.*) They'll think we're romancing when we tell 'em in Bolton, won't they, Sam?—Is she staying here, Mister Trinkmann?"

"No, she is staying at the baths of Divonne; she has been shopping in the town, and dined at the *table-d'hôte.* But I beg your pardon, Madame Briggs, had you not better move your chair a little?—you are sitting in a *courant d'air*—in a draught—you will be taking a *bed* cold."

The landlord minced his words sometimes. Mr. Briggs, on the other hand, though able to speak fairly good, if not quite faultless, English, had been so long accustomed to express himself in broad Lancashire, that he often used his vernacular idiom without knowing it.

"What did you say about the bed being cold?" he demanded (he had caught only the concluding part of the remark); "I'm sure it was warm enough for owt last night; I know I wor gradely sweltered."

M. Trinkmann looked puzzled; he had not the least idea what "sweltered" meant, but guessed it was some sort of illness.

"Indeed, I am very sorry," he said; "was it very painful? Is there anything I can do for you? There is a very clever English doctor here. Would you——?"

"A doctor! What for?" interrupted the retired waste-dealer, puzzled in his turn.

"I thought you said you were ill in the night—that you were gradely sweltered."

"I did, but that isn't being ill; it's only being grade—very hot—in a muck sweat, you know."

Even with this explanation Trinkmann did not seem much enlightened; but not deeming it discreet to cross-question his guest any further, he made a courtly bow and bolted to the door to receive a bevy of visitors who had just arrived by the steamer from Bouveret.

"You are English, I suppose?" said a pleasant

voice, with a slightly foreign accent, at Mr. Brigg's elbow.

Turning his head, the latter saw seated near him a short fat man, with a heavy moustache, hooked nose, white teeth, dark eyes, and black well-oiled hair.

"Yes, I'm an Englishman; are you?" answered and asked the Boltonian.

"No, I'm an American."

"You don't look like one," observed Mr. Briggs frankly, "nor yet talk like one; Americans talks through their noses."

"A *naturalised* American, I should say, I'm an Austrian—or rather a Hungarian—by birth; but I was compelled to leave my country, after 1849, for political causes, when I betook myself to the United States, where I have been living ever since. I am now on my way to Vienna and Pesth, to see my kinsfolk. You are travelling for pleasure, I suppose?"

"Yes; we're making a bit of a tower, my missus and me. We shall set off from here, maybe to-morrow or the day after, and go to Berne, Lucerne, and two or three other places in Switzerland. Then we thowt of going into Germany a bit."

"How singular! That is almost the same route we are proposing to take. We shall perhaps meet again."

"Like enough we may."

"And if we do, I shall be happy if I can be of any use to you. I know both the country and the language."

"Thank you kindly; we're always very glad of anybody to talk for us a bit, for we know nayther th' language nor th' country."

"Well then, in case we do meet again, suppose we exchange cards. Here is mine."

Whereupon the stranger produced an elegant morocco case, from which he extracted an enamelled "pasteboard," bearing the following inscription:

Friederich Ferdinand von Foozielmwiecksky,

and handed it with gracious mien to the Englishman. The latter fumbled in his breast-pocket, and drawing therefrom a card, gave it carelessly to his new acquaintance. As Friedrich Ferdinand von Foozielmwiecksky glanced at the address which it bore, his face assumed so curious an expression that it attracted the attention of Mr. Briggs, who, as he said to himself, "wondering what was up,"

took a side look over the Austrian's shoulder, and saw to his dismay that the card he had given the stranger was thus conceived :

SOLOMON SOWERBUTTS,
Dealer in Rags, Bones, and Old Iron.
HOLE I' TH' WALL,
Nr. Blackburn.

"That's a wrong 'un," uttered the Boltonian hastily; "it's a chap as does a bit o' business in waste with my sons. It had got mixed up with t' others. See, this is my gradely card."

Mr. Briggs, who had a keen eye to economy, had utilised some of his old business cards for private use; and the one he gave to Herr Foozielmwiecksky in exchange for that of Mr. Solomon Sowerbutts ran as follows, the centre line being half erased :

SAML. BRIGGS,
Dealer in Cotton Waste,
BOLTON.

"I'm not in business now," remarked Mr. Briggs apologetically. "I've given it up to my sons; but I thowt it was no use having fresh cards printed to come abroad with, so I've made shift with these old 'uns."

"And they do very well, I'm sure. So you have retired from business—made your fortune, I suppose?"

"Well, we have a little bit o' summat. I mean we have as much laid by as will keep us comfortable while we live, and be a nice nest-egg for th' lasses when we're gone; lads can look after thersells; besides, they've getten th' business, and there's not a better i' all Bolton."

"I'm very glad to hear it. I wish I could say I had made a fortune; but I'm unfortunately not in trade. I follow the calling of engineer, and shall be glad if I can make a small competency by the time I reach your age."

"Well, there's worse things than a small competency."

"Yes, half a loaf is better than no bread. And now I must say good-evening, for I'm going to the theatre. If we do not meet again here we shall perhaps meet in the Bernese Oberland, or in Germany. You will pay a visit to Dresden, of course?"

"I expect so. Dresden is down in my—what do you call it?—in my itinerary. Mr. Rovings—that's a travelled gentleman in our parts—Mr.

Rovings said we must on no account miss Dresden. And then, I think, we shall go on to Prague, and from there to Vienna."

"About when do you expect to be at Dresden?"

"In about a month, I think."

"Good; I'll look out for you. And now I must really leave you; I see my wife is waiting for me outside. Good-bye. A pleasant journey; hope to see you again soon."

"A very pleasant-spoken gentleman. I'm glad we have made his acquaintance. That's one of the advantages of going abroad—you make new acquaintances," observed Samuel, quoting a sentiment that he had once heard expressed by his friend Rovings.

"Very," answered Mrs. B. "I think foreigners is freer in their manners and politer than English folks. What did he say his name was?"

"Here it is, he gave me his card: Friederich Ferdinand von Foozle—Foozleum—Foozlum-whisky—ay, that is it, Foozlumwhisky—and a fool of a name it is too. I've heard o' Scotch whisky, an' Irish whisky, an' English whisky, an' malt whisky, an' potato whisky, o' whisky 'ot an' whisky cowd—but this is the first time I ever heard

o' Foozlumwhisky. I wonder at folks having such awkerd names."

"Maybe he cannot help it; it was ten to one his father's."

"He could change it, couldn't he? specially if he's been so long in America."

"We cannot judge o' foreigners by wersells," replied Mrs. Briggs sagely; "it's happen thowt a nice sort o' name where he comes from."

"Happen but it would bother 'em i' Bolton if they saw it on a signboord."

Our travellers, following the lines laid down for them in the Rovings' itinerary, journeyed through a part of the Bernese Oberland, made the tour of the Lake of the Four Cantons, and stayed a while at Zurich, Berne, and Lucerne. They were highly delighted with all they saw; and in the hotels and elsewhere they met so many English, and English-speaking people, that their ignorance of the language of the country caused them no inconvenience worth naming. Their principal, almost their only, worry was in the matter of soap. They were always leaving it behind them. The first remark made by Mr. Briggs on being shown into their bedroom at a new hotel was

generally: "Drat it, Mary Ann, we've forgotten th' soap again!" And then he would perform a vigorous pantomime by way of letting the chambermaid know what was lacking; for though every male creature in a Swiss hotel, from the proprietor to the boots, is nearly always more or less acquainted with the English tongue, the female domestics are not often equally skilled. Hence, when Mr. Briggs wanted soap he was compelled to rub his hands energetically together, as if he were producing a lather, and then apply them to his face as if he were washing it, which actions he would emphasise by pointing to the water and shaking a towel in the wondering *zimmermaedchen's* face. If the young woman were quick of apprehension, she would give a knowing nod, vanish, and in a few minutes return with a lump of scented soap—price one franc. But Swiss chambermaids, not being invariably of preternatural sharpness, it did once or twice happen that a girl, alarmed by Mr. Briggs' gesticulations, rushed incontinently to the landlord or secretary of the hotel, and informed him that the English gentleman in one hundred and twenty-two had gone mad. This was quite satisfactory to Mr. Briggs, however, for it brought somebody on the scene to

whom he could tell his wants without pantomime; and by some means or other he always succeeded in getting his soap. After many guesses and surmises, Mrs. Briggs came finally to the conclusion that the absence of soap from continental bedrooms arose from its dearness, and that its use was restricted to the cleansing of dirty linen—a theory to which the lady considered the small capacity of the chamber crockery lent additional probability. As she gravely remarked to her husband: "Folks who washed their faces with the damped corner of a towel no bigger than a pocket-handkerchief, and dried them with the other corner, needed neither much soap nor big basins."

Our travellers did not, however, see quite as much of Switzerland as, in the first instance, they had intended to do. Mrs. Briggs was one of those persons who are never happy unless they are slightly miserable, and who, in the absence of real cares, find it necessary to their comfort to create imaginary ones. The incident of the wrongly-delivered telegram at Geneva had suggested to her all sorts of alarming possibilities. Betsy—so ran her thoughts—might be took ill after all, for she had grown fast, and was not over strong; and Alice—her eldest, and married

daughter—who was expecting an "increase"—as she generally was—might have a bad time; and Jane, the cook, was that clumsy and okerd that she would not be surprised to hear any day of her having set th' house o' fire, or scalded herself to death, or let th' kitchen boiler blow up—"and us all this way off," as Mrs. Briggs plaintively added, after enumerating all these, and several more, conceivably impending calamities to her husband. The latter, on the other hand, was enjoying himself so much, and liked Switzerland so well, that he would willingly have stayed longer and seen every place marked down in his plan of travel. He did not share in the misgivings of his wife, and his confidence in his luck, which had stood him in such good stead at London, Paris, and Geneva, was as strong as ever. Nevertheless, he so far yielded to Mrs. Briggs' importunities as slightly to shorten what he had described to Herr von Foozielmwiecksky as their "bit of a tower in Switzerland," by at least a week; and a month after they had made the acquaintance of that gentleman in the Hôtel de la Paix at Geneva, they arrived at Romanshorn, on the lake of Constance, and took their passage to Lindau, the Bavarian port and railway station on the opposite side.

Among the passengers on the boat by which our Boltonians crossed over were several other English tourists, some of whom Mr. Briggs identified as Londoners.

"How do yo' know as they're Londoners?" asked his wife, when he communicated to her this opinion.

"By their twang, to be sure; just hearken to 'em."

"This being the lake of Constance," was saying one of the supposed cockneys to the other, "the town of Constance is somewhere in the neighbourhood, I imagine."

"Yes, it's in that direction," observed cockney No. 2, pointing westward. "I was just looking at a map; but I do not think we can see it, it's too far away."

"Let me see," said No. 1, as if trying to recall something. "Did not something once happen at Constance—some great man was either hanged or burnt alive there? Oh yes, I remember now, it was Luther—Luther was burnt there by order—yes—by order of the Council of Constance."

"Luther!" interrupted the other; "*what* are you thinking about, Robinson? How could it be Luther? Luther had nothing to do with Switzerland—it was Calvin. Calvin was the leader of the

reformation in Switzerland—what a memory you must have, to be sure!"

"Perhaps you are right, Jones. Now I think of it, I believe you are right. But it was the Council of Constance that ordered him to be burnt —you cannot deny that, Robinson?"

"Who wants to deny it?" answered Robinson, with a touch of scorn in his voice. "If Calvin was burnt at Constance, does it not stand to reason that it was done by order of the Council of Constance?"

"That's summut new to me," observed Briggs thoughtfully to his wife in an undertone. "I never knew afore as Calvin wor burnt alive at Constance; they didn't tell us that when they showed us his pulpit at Geneva."

"Them Londoners is maybe mistaken, Sam."

"Well, I don't know; that little red-whiskered chap talks as if he wor uncommon cocksure about it. Anyhow, I'll find it out when we get back to Bolton. I'll ask Mr. Tubthumper—he's a parson, and it's his business to know. But aren't we at the far end? Yon's Lindau, I think, and that's the train waiting for us. Let's get wer things together and make ready to land."

CHAPTER III.

LEAVING Lindau by the train which, as Mr. Briggs rightly conjectured, had been waiting for them, he and his wife went on to the ancient and picturesque city of Nuremberg, which they made their first halting-place in Germany. Having been recommended by the proprietor of the Schweizorhof at Lucerne to put up at the Drei Krone (Three Crowns) hotel, they proceeded thither accordingly, and asked for a bedroom.

The hotel secretary, who was the very pink of politeness, preceding them upstairs, led the way into a large chamber on the second-floor. As touching chairs, tables, carpets, and mirrors it was handsomely furnished, but when Mr. Briggs saw the beds he started back in dismay. They were about the width of babies' cribs, and very little longer.

"Is them all th' beds as you've got?" he exclaimed, in a voice of mingled indignation and despair.

The secretary, thinking he was not satisfied with the apartment, asked if he would like to see another. Mr. Briggs answered that he rather would. The secretary thereupon conducted him to the opposite side of the house, and, showing him a still larger, and more finely furnished room, inquired with a profusion of smiles if he liked that any better.

"The room's right enough," replied Mr. Briggs, "so is t'other. It's them beds I'm thinking about. How is a man like me—I weigh nearly eleven score—to lie in a thing like that, no bigger than a craddle; and it's waur than a craddle, for a craddle has sides to it and them beds has not. Have you nowt else?"

"I am really very sorry, sir, but we have no larger beds than these. No other sort is used in Germany."

"Well, if I lie i' one o' them I shall want roouping in." (Suddenly to the secretary.) "Have you any rooups, mounseer?"

"I beg your pardon, sir," said the secretary,

with a puzzled air, as he tried to develop from his consciousness the meaning of "rooups."

"Have you any ropes?" repeated Mr. Briggs slowly, and in his best English, "to rope us on with when we go to bed, to keep us from falling off and breaking wer bones."

"I understand now, sir," broke in the secretary, with the look of a man struck by a happy thought; "but I think we can manage better than that. We will put two beds close together and then they will be large enough, don't you think, sir?"

"For one, maybe, but not for two."

"For one, of course; that was what I meant, sir."

So Mr. and Mrs. Briggs occupied one room and four beds in the Three Crowns hotel at Nuremberg. And at all the houses of entertainment at which they subsequently stayed during their continental wanderings (where the beds were of equally lilliputian dimensions), they insisted on a similar arrangement, and thus became known far and wide as the "four-bedded couple."

The next stage in their journey was Dresden, where Mr. Briggs found awaiting him, at the Hôtel de Bellevue, a letter from his bankers at Bolton,

containing some circular notes, and another from home with the satisfactory news that all was well with their children and grandchildren, and that Mrs. Fillcradle, their married daughter, had just rejoiced the heart of her husband by the production of her seventh infant annual.

The day after their arrival, Mr. Briggs, accompanied by the boots of the hotel to show him the way, went to Thode's bank in Wildsruffer Strasse, for the purpose of melting one of his circular notes. When his business was despatched he was shown by one of the members of the firm into a spacious inner room, well-furnished, and supplied with an ample assortment of English newspapers, and courteously informed that, so long as he remained at Dresden, he was free to use it as often as he liked. So he sat down, and began greedily to devour *The Times*; for Mr. Briggs was a strong politician, and an omnivorous reader of newspapers. He was deep in the thrilling description of a desperate murder when he thought he heard his name spoken. Looking up in some surprise, who should he see but his quondam acquaintance — Mr. Friederich Ferdinand von Foozielmwiecksky, who instantly came forward,

shook him warmly by the hand, and expressed the greatest delight at their so opportune meeting.

"I thought I should find you, or hear of you, at Thode's bank," he said, "all the English and Americans come here sooner or later. And where are you staying? Ah, at the Bellevue, a capital house; you could not have done better. We are at the Saxe. How is Mrs. Briggs? How do you like Dresden? Have you seen any of the collections? Not yet. Then, if you like, we'll visit them together. I've seen them all before, of course, but it's so many years since that I shall be glad to see them again. The picture gallery is the finest out of Italy, you know, and the Green Vault contains the most magnificent jewellery, gems, and articles of vertu, in Europe. And I'll tell you what, as it's so fine, we'll go to-night, if you like, to the Grosse Garten—we can get supper there; there's a concert, and Wagner will play some of his best pieces. What do you say—shall we go?"

"Ay, to be sure, let's go. But what is it like, this Grosse Garten—a concert-room, did you say?"

"Oh dear no! it is a large garden—a park, I daresay you'd call it in England—quite a fine place—tall trees, grass, flowers, moonlight, music,

chops, steaks, beer, and all that sort of thing. You'll enjoy it amazingly, I'm sure you will."

"All right, I'll go and tell my missus, and then I'll take her a bit of a walk out."

"Well, look here, I'll go with you, if you'll let me. We can perhaps arrange an excursion—Dresden is a capital place for excursions—or a visit to one of the collections, and then I'll fetch my wife, and we can go together, you know. But would not you like a glass of beer first?"

"Well, I do feel raythe dry; what sort of a tap have they here?"

"You shall try it. Come along. I know a place we'll go to—the Trompeterschloessen."

"Trump—trump—trumpayterschluss—what's that when its fried, Mister Foozlumwhisky! They have the most rummest names i' this country as ever I heard on."

"It means the Little Trumpeter's Castle. See, here it is," said the Austrian, leading the way into a *restauration*, over the door of which hung the sign of a herald on horseback. Inside they found a spacious and well-lighted, if somewhat old-fashioned, room, filled with small tables, at most of which sat thirsty Dresdeners, restoring themselves

with beer, and reading the news of the day. As Mr. Briggs mentally remarked, nothing was being drunk but beer—nothing either stronger or weaker. "*Zwei lager*," said Foozielmwiecksky to an attendant nymph, as he and the Boltonian seated themselves near an unoccupied table.

"*Zwei lager*; that means beer, does it?" inquired Briggs, as the girl returned with two immense crystal tankards with pewter lids.

"No; beer's beer, just as in English. Taste it now, while it's fresh, and tell me how you like it."

"Stunning!" exclaimed Mr. Briggs, taking the glass from his lips after a long pull. "Bithmon I'll come here again. What do you say they call it—*zwei lager?* Gradely good beer, I call it."

"It's lager beer—the beer of the house—the brew—the entire, don't you see? One says lager for short; *zwei* means two; so that *zwei lager* simply means two glasses of beer."

"Oh, that's it, is it? Here, young woman" (beckoning to the waitress), "*zwei lager* moor."

The girl understood, and taking the two glasses away, brought them back filled to the brim with foaming nut-brown nectar.

Mr. Briggs was delighted.

"There," he said, "I can order a glass of beer i' German, anyhow. If I was to stop here two or three weeks I should pick it up fast; I'm sure I should. It sounds very like rank Bolton when they talken it. A language isn't so hard to learn if you nobbut know it, I can see that. But it's time to be going; my missus 'll think I've lost mysel. What's th' choke, Mister Foozlumwhisky?"

The Austrian did not seem exactly to understand.

"What's the joke?" he said. "I did not hear any joke made; I was not speaking, Mr. Briggs."

"I didn't say joke, I said choke. You happen don't know what th' choke means. It means what's th' shot—how much is there to pay? Because I'm going to be th' paymaster this time."

To this proposal Foozielmwiecksky made a slight show of opposition; but he did not insist, and Mr. Briggs was allowed to discharge the reckoning, which, to his surprise, amounted only to about eightpence—half the amount, as he remarked, it would have been in England, for beer not half so good.

They went to the Grosse Garten, and Mr. and Mrs. Briggs' delight with the entertainment and the

refreshments (ordered by Herr Foozielmwiecksky) was unbounded.

They seated themselves round a large table under the widespreading branches of an ancient lime-tree; and when the band struck up a lively air, and Kappelmeister Wagner came to the front of the orchestra and joined in with his silver bugle—a present from the king—and a bright young moon shone upon the scene with her mellow light, Mrs. B. became quite enraptured, declaring that she had not believed anything could be so nice; and Mr. B. informed Foozielmwiecksky (in an aside) that in his opinion not heaven itself could be more enchanting. This enthusiasm was probably, in part at least, attributable to the lager beer, of which they all drank rather freely. They finished up the evening with a bottle of Saxon champagne, and only went away when the last piece of music had been played and the lamps in the orchestra were being put out. Again Mr. Briggs insisted on paying the "choke," nor did he find the Austrian's objections to his doing so more difficult to overcome than earlier in the day. They drove to their hotels in the same cab, and, before separating, agreed to go

up the river next day to Schandau. Mrs. Foozielmwiecksky and Mrs. Briggs got on wonderfully well together; for the former lady was an American born, though she spoke German fluently, and, being very lively and intelligent, added much to the enjoyment of the party.

For several days after their visit to the Grosse Garten the Briggses led what was for them a decidedly riotous life. They were always going somewhere—to Pillnitz, to Koenigstein, or to Löschwitz. They went to see the Bastei, and spent a glorious day at Moritzburg, whither they drove in a carriage and pair. The evenings they generally spent at one of the gardens, or on the Bruhl Terrace, where there was also a nightly concert, and Mr. Briggs tasted the tap of almost every brewery in Dresden. He generally paid the reckoning, by way, as he thought, of making some slight return to Foozielmwiecksky for his trouble in taking them about and talking for them; and, so far as money matters went, he put himself almost entirely into that gentleman's hands. What could he do else? He knew as little of thalers, grosschen, and pfennige as of the customs and language of the country. In these

circumstances it was perhaps not to be wondered at that at the end of a week the proceeds of the circular note he had cashed at Thode's bank had melted away, and that he was compelled to cash another. This rather took the edge off his enjoyment, and caused him to inform his Austrian friend that he had spent almost as much time in Dresden as he could well spare, and must shortly continue his journey to Prague and Vienna.

"Very good," said Mr. Foozielmwiecksky, "I am ready when you are. When shall we start?"

"Suppose we say the day after to-morrow?"

"The day after to-morrow let it be then. You want to make a halt at Prague, I suppose?"

"I do; Mr. Rovings has put it down in my itinerary. He said it was one of the remarkablest places on th' Continent, and I should not like to miss it."

CHAPTER IV.

THE last evening of their stay in Dresden Mrs. Briggs was occupied in packing up, and the Foozielmwieckskys went to the opera, whither Briggs did not care to accompany them. Left in this way to his own resources, he determined to pay a farewell visit to the Grosse Garten. He had by this time picked up two or three words of German, and having been at the Garten once or twice before, felt quite sure he could manage quite well alone. So off he set, and as many other people were going in the same direction, and it was broad daylight, he had no difficulty in finding his way, and arrived safely at his destination. The music had already begun; and sitting down under a tree, he proceeded to con over, and try to make out, the bill of fare which he found lying on the

table before him, thinking the while what he should order for supper. As he was thus occupied a waiter approached him and politely asked if he wanted anything.

"*Zwei lager*," said Mr. Briggs, forgetting that he was alone and that *zwei* meant two.

"*Ich bitte Sie*" (I beg your pardon)—the man began.

"Bitter beer? No, *zwei lager*," interrupted Briggs.

"*Jah wohl*," returned the waiter, thinking the English Herr was expecting a friend. *Wollen Sie auch Essen?*"

Sam, knowing that *Essen* meant something to eat, gave an affirmative nod, and pointed to an item in the bill of fare which he had previously marked in his mind as denoting a dish he might safely order. *Braten* he had been told meant "roast meat;" *ein* meant "one;" so in signifying to the waiter to bring him *ein gebratenes Huhn*, he thought he was ordering a plate of some sort of roast—what sort, he did not exactly know, nor much care.

The waiter being now more than ever sure that the Herr Engländer expected a friend, answered

with his eternal "*Jah wohl*," and went off at a run to execute the order.

More than half-an-hour passed away, and Briggs, who was both hungry and thirsty, was beginning to think that the waiter had forgotten all about his glass of beer and plate of roast meat, when he beheld that functionary coming towards him with a large tray, on which appeared a roasted fowl as big as a small goose, flanked by two immense tankards of beer, half a pound or so of fried potatoes, and a big loaf of bread.

"God bless me," said Mr. Briggs to himself, "the fellow has surely gone mad!"

Then it flashed upon his mind that he had asked for *zwei lager* instead of *ein glass bier*, and the moment after it occurred to him that he might possibly have made a similar mistake in the ordering of his roast meat.

The waiter placed his tray on the table, and as there was just then a call for his services elsewhere, he vanished before our Boltonian had sufficiently recovered from his bewilderment, and mustered up enough German to request an explanation. So there was clearly nothing for it, he thought, but to make the best of a bad

job—drink the beer and eat as much of the roast fowl and etceteras as he might. The shot would have to be paid anyhow, and he resolved to take all the value for his money he could comfortably stow away.

Every eye was now directed towards him. Germans, for the most part, are large eaters, and like to see a man feed well; yet a single Englishman, with a table, two tankards of beer, and a roast fowl all to himself, was a sufficiently novel spectacle to cause general curiosity, and the people in Mr. Briggs' immediate neighbourhood gave considerably more attention to his proceedings than to the music of the band. But this suddenly-acquired notoriety did not trouble him much, and he tackled his ample supper with such energy, determination, and appetite, that in a short time two-thirds of the *gebratenes Huhn* and most of the potatoes had vanished from sight. Then he paused, poured down his throat all that remained of the second pot of beer, and feeling thereafter tolerably well satisfied with himself and the state of things in general, leaned back in his chair and listened with much complacency to the enlivening strains of the orchestra.

From supping to sleeping there is only a step, and it was not long before the pose of Mr. Briggs' body, his closed eyes, and an occasional loud snore, showed that he was in a condition of happy oblivion. There he remained for a good hour or more, until he was aroused by Nemesis in the shape of the head-waiter (not the same that had served him) asking for the payment of his small account.

"How much?—*Wie viel?*"—demanded Mr. Briggs. And, not understanding the answer, he put his hand into his pocket and pulled out a number of coins. "Here, help yourself," he said. The man did help himself—so effectually indeed, that only a few copper pieces returned to their owner's possession.

"Please remember the waiter, sir," said the attendant, with an obsequious grin, using the only English phrase he knew, but which, on similar previous occasions, had produced results agreeable to his feelings,

"Ay," replied Briggs grimly, as he buttoned up his pocket, and rose to take his departure, "I'll remember thee when I get hoom, my lad."

The concert was over, the lamps were being

put out, and soon the park was plunged in darkness and silence. But our hero, having marked well the path by which he had come, experienced no difficulty in finding his way back as far as the quarter known as the Burgerwiese. There, however, he was at fault, and taking a wrong turn, went a long distance astray before he discovered his mistake. Then he was sorely puzzled. People go to bed early in Dresden; the streets were nearly deserted; there were no cabs about. He accosted several wayfarers, but he did not succeed in making them understand what he wanted. They would listen to him with the utmost politeness, speak to him volubly in German (which might as well have been Sanskrit), and pass on. He next tried to retrace his steps, and, as he afterwards said, "went up and down all macks o' streets." He thought he must have walked at least twenty miles, when, utterly worn out and almost desperate, he sat down on a doorstep to rest himself. As he thus sat, he perceived coming briskly towards him three or four men, seemingly young and in good spirits, for they were talking loudly, and now and then one of them would sing a stave or two of a jovial song. Mr. Briggs thought this was an oppor-

tunity not to be lost, and rising, hat in hand (he had observed that Dresdeners were always either raising their hats or smoking, or both), he asked in supplicatory accents:

"Could you tell me, please, which is the way *nach* the Belle Vue Hôtel."

"You are English?" said one of the strangers, all of whom also raised their hats, the moment Briggs accosted them.

"I am, and right glad I am to hear it spoken once moor. I've been walking up and down these streets a matter of two hours, and could make nobody understand as I'd lost mysel'."

"And you want to go to the Hôtel Belle Vue?"

"I do."

"Well, it's a long way from here, and I am afraid you could not very well find it alone. But I'll tell you what—I am an Englishman myself, and if you will come into this restaurant for a few minutes, where we have to meet some friends, I'll see you safely home."

Mr. Briggs joyfully accepted this timely offer, and, surrendering himself to the guidance of his new-found friend, entered a dark passage, a few yards farther on, at the end of which was a door,

opening on an equally dark staircase. Up this staircase they mounted, and opening another door on the first-floor they found themselves in a large low room, the air of which was so thick with tobacco smoke, that the objects and persons it contained were at first hardly discernible. But if not very visible, the latter were not slow in making themselves heard. The appearance of the new-comers was the signal for an uproarious shout, followed by a series of energetic hand-shakings, and, to the retired waste-dealer's unspeakable surprise, embracings and kissings. As his eyes became accustomed to the obscurity, he saw that the inmates of the room were all young men, all were smoking long pipes, all had little coloured caps stuck on the sides of their heads, and several wore long boots outside their trousers. The cheeks and noses of many of these interesting youths were covered with sticking-plaster, two or three had their heads bandaged, the faces of nearly all were more or less scarred; and one tall fellow, with a black patch over his eye, was making fierce cuts in the air with a long rapier. Inquisitive, and, as he thought, bloodthirsty glances were shot at Mr. Briggs through the smoke, and that estimable

gentleman began greatly to fear that he had fallen among thieves, and he wished very much that he was in bed with Mrs. Briggs, or even sitting on the doorstep which he had so lately left.

"Allow me," said the young fellow who had brought him in—a chubby-faced blue-eyed lad, with long boots, a long scar on his left cheek, and two or three more on his head—"allow me to present to this honourable society my distinguished countryman" (*sotto voce* to Briggs: "What is your name, please?") "Mr. Briggs of Bolton. He has lost his way, and doesn't know how to find it; but as he proposes to celebrate his admission to our merry meeting by paying for beers and champagne, I vote that we escort him to his lodgings with all the honours. Is it agreed?"

"Agreed! agreed! agreed!" shouted twenty voices.

Then the chubby-faced youth explained to his countryman what was expected of him, and the latter, albeit rather ruefully, agreeing thereto, the liquor was ordered.

"What are they?" whispered Mr. Briggs anxiously to his companion.

"*Burschen* (students). We are from the Mining

Academy of Freiberg, the others are mostly from Leipsic, and we meet here occasionally for intellectual conversation and a little relaxation from our studies. It's a sort of club, you know."

"Oh, that's it, is it," said the other, greatly relieved. "But what's the matter wi' your faces?"

"Those marks, you mean? They are only *Säbelhiebe*—scars got in fighting."

"And what do you fight with—knives?"

"No, rapiers—swords—but we are not allowed to cut anywhere but the face; there is no danger, you know."

"Well, for my part, I'd a good deal liefer see you fight with your fists than them long skewers, if fight you must."

At this point the beer was brought in; then glasses were filled, and the students, crowding round their guest, touched his glass with theirs, and drank his health with a hundred "*hochs*."

Next came the champagne, followed by more beer; songs were sung; Mr. Briggs tried to sing one himself, but broke down lamentably. After this sort of thing had gone on for an hour or two the chubby-faced student with the big boots suggested that it was about time they were escorting

his distinguished countryman to his hotel. On this hint the bill was called for and paid, and the respectable Mr. Briggs sallied forth into the night, surrounded by a score of reckless, harum-scarum, half-tipsy *burschen*. They went singing and shouting through the streets, to the great alarm of sober citizens, numbers of whom rose from their beds and stuck their night-capped heads out of the window to see what was the matter. More than once the roysterers were chased by the police, and escaped only by dint of dodging and hard running, on which occasions, Mr. Briggs was forced along at such a rate that he feared every moment he would drop down in a fit of apoplexy. At length they arrived before the Hôtel Belle Vue, whereupon the chubby-faced youth and another *bursch*, led our hero up the steps—for he really required leading—shook him warmly by the hand, gave a terrific ring at the door-bell, and then rejoined their companions, who, as the astonished porter admitted the belated Briggs, saluted him with a war-whoop-like yell that almost frightened the poor fellow out of his wits, and so startled the landlord that, thinking all his guests were being murdered in their beds, he rushed to the alarm-bell and rang it like

mad, a proceeding which had the effect of bringing on the scene in hot haste all the gendarmes and fire-engines of the quarter. A terrific row ensued, to the great delight of the *burschen*, who, after dispersing in various directions, returned to the hotel, mixed with the crowd which had already assembled, and were profuse in their offers of assistance to work the engines and put out the fire.

CHAPTER V.

UNDER cover of the confusion Briggs crept quietly off to bed, but he never remembered exactly how he got there. He awoke in the morning with a terrible headache, and as he opened his eyes he encountered the still more terrible looks of his better-half, who told him he ought to feel ashamed of himself—carrying on in that way at his time of life—whatever he was thinking of she could not tell—where had he been and what had he been doing? she asked, and, cruellest question of all, how much brass had he spent? Fortunately for Briggs the packing up, which was still going on, took up so much of his wife's attention that the storm soon blew over, and a cup of tea, followed by a few sodas and brandy, restored him to his wonted spirits, if they did not quite cure his headache

and settle his inward qualms. But he never forgot his last evening in Dresden, the Grosse Garten, the *burschen*, with their big boots, plaistered faces, and intellectual conversation, and, above all, the nice little reckoning they made him pay for beer and champagne, the amount whereof he has never disclosed even to his dearest friend, much less to the wife of his bosom. The travellers left Dresden the same day, as arranged, and arriving at Prague in due course, took up their quarters at the *Schwartzer Ross*—the Black Horse. They visited the principal lions of the place, passed a whole day in the wonderful Hradschin, wandered about the quaint streets of the historic city, and admired the wonderful views from its walls. Mr. Briggs was delighted to observe several tall chimneys vomiting forth clouds of black smoke, and the industrial uses to which the river Moldau is so extensively put. The number of mills and manufactories on its banks pleased him greatly—he said it was like being at "hooum"—they had got to a place at last where there was some life.

Then they started for Vienna. When the bill was called for at the Black Horse, Mr. Foozielmwiecksky, in the most natural manner possible,

asked Mr. Briggs to let the whole amount be included in one reckoning, remarking that he had directed his remittances to be sent to Vienna, and that, pending their arrival thither, he was just a little short of the needful.

"All right," said Mr. Briggs carelessly. "Take this five-hundred thaler note (£75), and settle, and get th' tickets at th' railway. You can give me what change there is out in th' train, and t'other can stand o'er till we get to Vienna."

The tickets were taken, the luggage registered, and, thanks to the address of Mr. Foozielmwiecksky—aided by a tip judiciously administered to the conductor—the four friends secured a second-class compartment all to themselves—"a deal comfortabler," as Mrs. Briggs observed, than many an English first. They travelled by the night express, and no sooner was the train fairly on its way than Mr. Foozielmwiecksky, remarking that he had a touch of headache, leaned back in the corner, pulled his cap over his eyes, and composed himself to sleep. Mr. Briggs thought about his change, but in view of the Austrian's headache and his ardent desire to be undisturbed, concluded not to remind him of it just then. There would be

plenty of time before they reached Vienna; so, after smoking a cigar, he also cushioned himself up in his corner and made an excursion into the land of dreams. The ladies did likewise, and in a short time the only sounds to be heard in the compartment were the snoring of its four occupants.

Mr. Briggs slept for several hours. When he opened his eyes the train was still rushing onward through the darkness, the lamp in the roof of the carriage, flickering feebly, gave a dim uncertain light, and he had to make a vigorous mental effort before he could remember where he was and who were his companions. He heard voices in conversation, and distinguished, or thought he distinguished—for he was not even yet fully awake—that of Mrs. Foozelum saying to Mr. Foozelum (as he and Mrs. Briggs had lately begun to call their new friends between themselves, for short) in English:

"Did you get anything out of the old softy?"

And the other answered in German: "*Jah wohl*," and something more that our Boltonian could not make out. But he had been long enough in Germany to learn that *Jah wohl* is a very strong affirmative—a sort of double-barrelled

"Yes"—and Foozelum doubtless meant his wife to understand that he *had* got something out of the old "softy," and no mistake. It occurred to Mr. Briggs that he might possibly be the old "softy" in question, an idea that roused him to the most intense wakefulness in a moment, and made him resolve to broach the subject of his change forthwith.

"I hope you've enjoyed your snooze," said Foozielmwiecksky loudly, on seeing him move, "I feel all the better for mine. Here, take a *soupçon* of this cognac; it will do you good."

Mr. Briggs accepted the invitation, albeit he did not much lessen the contents of the Austrian's spirit-flask.

"Now," he said, returning it to him, "as you feel so much better, you can perhaps settle that little matter, and give me my change."

"I should only be too happy, my dear sir, if there were sufficient light; but, as you see, we are almost in complete darkness. The change I received for your five-hundred thaler note is all in Austrian paper money of various amounts; moreover, I have not made out my account; and if we begin to meddle with the business now we shall be

sure to make a muddle of it. Better wait until we arrive at Vienna, or, at any rate, until sunrise."

The plea was reasonable; moreover Briggs, whose confidence in the good faith of his companion was beginning to be shaken, reflected that he did not understand Austrian money, and were he to insist on a settlement there and then, he could neither check the figures of the account nor, by that obscure light, examine his change, and might thus be beguiled into taking much less than his due. He therefore decided to let the matter alone for the present, as Foozielmwiecksky had suggested. Nevertheless his thoughts were none of the pleasantest, and kept him effectually awake during the remainder of the journey. Shortly after sunrise, and before there was light enough to read by, the compartment was invaded by four more passengers, two of whom placed themselves between Briggs and Foozielmwiekcsky; hence all hope of a settlement before they reached Vienna had to be abandoned.

"I'll take you to a good place I know of," said Foozielmwiecksky, on arrival at their destination; "it's a private hotel, very comfortable, and a deal cheaper than the Imperial and other swell places."

"All right," says Mr. Briggs; "go ahead."

They all got into one carriage, the Austrian directed the driver whither to go, and after passing through a bewildering labyrinth of streets they pulled up before a house of somewhat unprepossessing exterior, and, as Briggs judged, in a poor quarter of the city.

But the retired waste-dealer had his wits about him; he was not going to be led quite like a lamb to the slaughter.

"Just stop a minute," he said to the Austrian, as the latter was ordering the luggage to be unloaded, "let's see inside first. My missus is raythor particular about beds. We always looks at wer rooms before we makes up our minds —don't we, Mary Ann?"

This suggestion was evidently not altogether to Foozielmwiecksky's mind; nevertheless, he led the way into the house; his wife and the Briggses following.

The "hotel" was situated on the second-floor, and, as the door opened, their noses were saluted with a smell that seemed to be compounded in about equal proportions of foul air, onions and garlic, and stale tobacco. After a few words from the Austrian the Briggses were

shown into one bedroom while the "Foozelums" were being ushered into another.

"Them windows has never been opened sin' they were made, in my opinion," remarked Mr. Briggs, sniffing the impure air, "and they are so nasty you can hardly see through 'em."

Meanwhile Mrs. B. was examining the beds. "Why, the sheets is not clean," she exclaimed, "and the blankets is that black——" and then, with almost a shriek, she threw the bedclothes from her and sprang hastily backwards—in her excitement capsizing her husband, who happened at the same moment to be stooping in order to get a better look under the other bed.

"Bless me, Mary Ann, whatever's to do?" he exclaimed, as he scrambled to his feet; "have you seen a ghost?"

"I've seen waur, there's *them things* i' th' beds."

"I thowt as much by th' look on 'em. Let's be off. I say" (going to the door and raising his voice), "Mister Foozilumwhisky, this shop will not do, you must find another."

"Why, what's the matter?"

"Matter! there's *them things* i' th' house—beds is full on 'em."

"What things?"

"Sowdgers."

"Soldiers," said the other, looking rather alarmed, "soldiers in the house—what do you mean, Mr. Briggs?"

"Bugs!" shouted the retired waste-dealer excitedly. "There's regiments; I never seed moor in a rag warehouse. Come, let's get out o' this barracks."

"It's very awkward to go now," answered the Austrian, "after I've bespoke apartments and all. I'll ask them to find you another bedroom."

"Not in this shop. And my wife will not stop at any price; cart-ropes would not keep her."

Whereupon Mr. and Mrs. Briggs hurried downstairs, the Austrian with his wife reluctantly and sulkily following them. A second time Foozielmwiecksky told the coachman whither to drive. It was to another private hotel they were going, he said, which, when he lived in Vienna, was both clean and respectable.

They were soon there, and its outside appearance was decidedly more promising than that of the first, while inside not the most minute researches of Mrs. Briggs nor the prying eyes of her husband could discover anything objectionable. The house was small, so was the bedroom, but they were clean;

the landlady was pleasant-spoken and of cheerful countenance, and, to the great delight of our travellers, she spoke excellent English.

After they had washed off the traces of their journey, they sat down to a substantial breakfast, and Mr. Briggs took an early opportunity to press Mr. Foozielmwiecksky for the change out of his five-hundred thaler note, and the "little explanatory statement he had been good enough to promise him."

"Certainly," replied Mr. Foozielmwiecksky, "certainly. Just let me finish this chop—what an excellent chop it is, to be sure—and I'll go into my room and make the account out."

The chop was finished, and the eater of it withdrew, seemingly very eager to comply with Mr. Briggs' request. But at the end of an hour —during which time he smoked at least three cigars—the Austrian had not returned; whereupon Mr. Briggs went to his room and, knocking at the door, asked how much longer Mr. Foozielmwiecksky meant to keep him waiting.

"Oh, didn't he tell you?" said Mrs. F., with the most innocent air imaginable. "He has gone out; but he'll be back before dinner-time. He has gone to call on his mother. He has not seen

her for ten years, and she'd naturally be annoyed if he did not call upon her before doing anything else."

"Damn his mother!" exclaimed Mr. Briggs, now fully roused. "I want my change. What does he mean by humbugging me in this way? Is he going to run away?"

"Don't be insulting, Mr. Briggs," said the lady severely; "you forget yourself. My husband will settle with you the moment he returns."

Mr. Briggs went back disconsolately to his wife, and told her how matters stood. Conscious that he had been rather indiscreet, he had refrained hitherto from making full confession of his folly. Mrs. Briggs knew the Austrian had to give him some change, but she thought the amount was only trifling.

"How much did you say it was?"

"Five hundred thalers."

"That's?"

"Seventy-four pounds."

"Seventy-four pounds! seventy-four pounds!" she almost screamed.

"Ay, but then there's the hotel bill at Prague, and the railway fare here to come off. It is maybe sixty pounds altogether as I want on him."

"Well, you have done it now!—sixty pounds

clean gone—we'se never see it no more. Where's your luck now, as you talk so much about? Why, you have no proof as you ever gave it him—no receipt nor nowt."

"How could I get a receipt? He was going to give me th' change next minute. But it's not lost yet whatever you think. I always was lucky, and you'll see."

"Lucky!" exclaimed the lady, with ineffable disdain. "And you call it lucky to let a foreigner diddle you out o' sixty pounds. If that's being lucky, let me be unlucky."

Poor Mr. Briggs did not reply. In a contest of words with his better-half he generally got the worst of it, and in the present instance he had so little to say for himself that he probably exercised a wise discretion in leaving it unsaid. He hung about the house all day, waiting for the return of Foozielmwiecksky, only descending into the street at intervals—just to stretch his legs, as he observed to his wife—and weary work he found it. At length, long after dinner, and when he had begun to fear that his man was gone away for good, his patience was rewarded by seeing him cross the corridor and enter his bedroom.

Briggs followed him.

"How about my change?" he asked in an indignant voice.

"Your what?" said the other.

"My change," roared Briggs, "the change out of that five-hundred thaler note I gave you at Prague."

"You are mistaken, Mr. Briggs, you did not give me a five-hundred thaler note, it was only fifty thalers, and instead of being your debtor—as you will see by this statement—you owe me eighty florins, which I shall be glad if you can give me, as I have not had time to cash any of my American money."

"You infernal scoundrel!" exclaimed Mr. Briggs, as soon as he could speak, having for the space of half a minute been struck dumb with rage and surprise. "You gallows-looking blackguard—you—you——"

"Come now, stop that, Mr. Briggs, there's law in this country, and if you don't mind what you are doing I will have you arrested for defamation of character. But"—drawing him towards the door—"come out of earshot of my wife, she's in the next room."

And before the Englishman could recover his

breath a second time, or regain his presence of mind, he was out in the corridor, and Foozielmwiecksky, shutting the door in his face, double bolted himself inside.

What was to be done now? Submit to be swindled out of sixty pounds in that audacious way he would not—yet how could he help himself? He had no receipt and no witness, for his wife had not seen the note he had entrusted to the Austrian, and he and his wife were doubtless quite ready to swear anything. Briggs did not see his way clearly at all. "It was a gradely awkward do," he said to himself. Still, he did not despair; there might be a way. As he thought thus, he caught sight of the landlady, Frau Jordan, at the other end of the passage. Acting on the impulse of the moment, he followed her into her room.

"Can I speak to you on a matter of business, ma'am?" said he.

"Certainly, take a seat; what can I do for you?"

"It's about this Foozlumwhisky."

"Indeed! I thought he was a friend of yours."

"Not he; he's only a chance acquaintance as we picked up at Dresden."

"Well, if I had known that, Mr. Briggs, he

would not have been long in this house, I can tell you. It was only because he came with you, and I saw you were a thorough English gentleman, that I did not turn him from my door or hand him over to the police."

On hearing this Mr. Briggs gave a long dismal whistle, and looked particularly blue.

"What has he been up to? Who is he?" he asked.

"As it happens, I can tell you all about him. My porter—the man who carried your things in, you know—Traugott Taeglich, used to be in the police, and the moment he set eyes on this Herr von Foozielmwiecksky, as he calls himself, he recognised him. His name is not Foozielmwiecksky at all—it is Spitzbube. He was once in the army, but was turned out for misconduct; and then he was a man about town here in Vienna and lived by his wits, became a cardsharper, and I don't know what besides; was mixed up with a bad case of cheating, and would have been arrested and locked up if he had not shown a clean pair of heels. This is nearly ten years since, but I have only to say a single word to the police and they would arrest him to-night. It is no business of

mine, however; and to have a man arrested in the house would create a commotion and make it unpleasant for the other lodgers."

"I'm afraid it's all up with my sixty pounds," said Mr. Briggs dolefully.

"I'm afraid it is," said Frau Jordan, when she had heard his story; "but if you like I'll send for the gendarmes and give him in charge at once."

"No, no," answered Briggs, who had just thought of a plan, "that would ruin everything. Anyhow I'll have another try to come by my own. Will you, please, lend me a chair, Mrs. Jordan, and, whatever I do, don't say anything, or seem to take any notice."

Mr. Briggs took the chair, and placed it before Foozielmwiecksky's, *alias* Spitzbube's, door, and peered through the keyhole. All was in darkness; he and his wife had evidently withdrawn to their sleeping apartment—a small room adjacent to the one that served them as a parlour, but having no direct communication with the corridor. Nevertheless Briggs kept his post—sat there the night through—like a sentinel in face of the enemy. Now and then he dozed a little, but his chair was so placed that nobody could enter or quit

Mr. Spitzbube's room without his leave. People rise early in Austria, and before six o'clock he heard the sounds of voices and footsteps in the parlour. Then the key was turned, the door moved slowly, very slowly, on its hinges, and the night-capped and curl-papered locks of Mrs. Spitzbube were protruded into the passage. This was enough for our hero. With an impetuosity that can only be compared to Roderick Dhu's onslaught on James FitzJames—likened by the poet to "adder darting from the coil" and "mountain-cat that guards her young"—he dashed at the door, and the lady, bewildered by the suddenness of the onslaught, and conscious of extremely scanty clothing, ran shrieking to her husband.

As the latter rushed out in his shirt sleeves to the rescue, Briggs quietly shut the outer door and put the key in his pocket.

"What means this violence, Mr. Briggs?" sternly asked Mr. Spitzbube. "I'd have you know, sir, this is my private apartment; you are surely drunk. I'll summon the police."

"Come now, none o' that there gammon; I'se not stir out of here till I get my change."

"Upon my word, this is past bearing. If you don't go out quietly, sir, I'll kick you out."

"You will, will you, you beggar? I'd like to see you try; I'm an old fellow, I know; but I'm man for two like you yet; and if you offer to touch me I'll take you by the scruft o' th' neck and throw you out of the window."

"But——"

"But me no buts, you raskil. Let's have no more o' this nonsense. I know who you are, my lad. You were once i' th' army—you have been a card-sharper—the police wants you badly, Mr. Ooozleum, Boozleum, Foozleumwhisky, and it is not your right name—Spitzbube is your name. If you don't fork out that brass I'll open the window and shout for th' police; but pay up like a man and you shall go free."

"Do you promise that?" said Spitzbube eagerly. He had become terribly crestfallen during Mr. Briggs' speech.

"I do, and the sooner you stump up the sooner you'll get away."

"Just one minute—I won't keep you longer."

Spitzbube went into the bedroom, exchanged a few whispered words with his wife, and returned with a bundle of bank-notes.

"Here," said he, "count them; there are six hundred florins, the full amount of your change."

"Are they good 'uns—not foorged, I mean?" asked Mr. Briggs suspiciously.

"Quite good, they are what I got at Prague."

"If they are, you can go as soon as you like; but I'll make sure, I'll ask Mrs. Jordan."

He opened the door. The landlady was in the corridor. She assured him that the notes were perfectly good, and heartily congratulated him on the so miraculous recovery of his money.

"Good-day to you," he said, nodding pleasantly to the discomfited Spitzbube, "I wish you a pleasant journey."

Then he went into his own room and found Mrs. Briggs still in bed.

"Wherever have you bin?" she asked, in a querulous voice, "you have not bin i' bed of all night."

"Look here, owd lass, look here," he shouted, as he waved the bank-notes over his head like a flag of victory. "I've got the brass; didn't I tell you I was always lucky?"

Whereupon he executed a pyrrhic dance round the room, until, striking his shins against the sharp bar of a chair, his song of triumph was changed into a howl of anguish. Then he told his wife all that had happened.

"Well, you really are lucky, Sam," was her admiring comment, for she was sincerely rejoiced at the recovery of the lost notes, "I never said it before, but you are."

"More luckier than clever, you once said, I think."

"Ay, but you've bin clever too, this time, Sam —both clever and lucky."

The day following these events, Mr. Briggs was strolling in the Prater, when he felt himself struck smartly on the back, as a familiar voice exclaimed: "Hallo, Briggs, you here!"

"God bless us, Mr. Rovings, is it you? I thowt you was in Bolton."

"And so I was four days ago; but I was called away on business, and am now *en route* for Bohemia." (Mr. Rovings was partner in a large machine-making firm.) "And how have you been going on all this time? Come into this café, and let us have a talk."

So they went into the café, and, while they discussed a few glasses of Vienna's unequalled beer, Briggs told his friend all that had befallen him and his wife on their journey.

"Well, all that I can say, Briggs," said Mr.

Rovings, when the former had finished his narration, "is that you are the most fortunate man I know. The way you get into and out of scrapes is really extraordinary. But just take my advice, and don't trust a chance travelling acquaintance with your money another time."

"I won't that, Mr. Rovings, I can tell you; I've had a lesson as I shall not soon forget."

And then they parted; for Mr. Roving's business was pressing, and he left Vienna for the place to which he was bound the same afternoon. When, two months later, Mr. Briggs returned to Bolton, he found that his reputation had preceded him—everybody had heard of his adventures and of the good fortune that had always attended him on his travels, and he has ever since been known amongst his friends as "Lucky Sam Briggs."

THE END.

CHARLES DICKENS AND EVANS, CRYSTAL PALACE PRESS.